



**COUNTY OF FAUQUIER  
OFFICE OF THE COUNTY ADMINISTRATOR**

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**PRESS RELEASE  
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

August 2, 2024

**VIRGINIA DEQ ISSUES DROUGHT WARNING ADVISORY FOR FAUQUIER COUNTY**

**Warrenton, Virginia** – On July 19, 2024, the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) updated its drought watch and warning advisories which were originally issued on June 24, 2024. A Drought Warning Advisory remains in place for Fauquier County. Precipitation deficits in combination with increased temperatures have resulted in rapid intensification of drought throughout the majority of the Commonwealth with substantial below-normal observations noted within the Northern Virginia and Shenandoah drought evaluation regions. Additionally, forecasts in the upcoming ten days indicate high heat and minimal projected precipitation.

In accordance with the Fauquier County Comprehensive Drought Management and Emergency Preparedness Plan and Fauquier County Code Chapter 19, Article II, when DEQ issues a drought warning, Fauquier County in consultation with the Fauquier County Water and Sanitation Authority (FCWSA) and Towns, will implement voluntary water conservation practices and provide access to ways individuals can limit water usage. At this time, Fauquier County Government encourages all citizens to limit and conserve water usage particularly our citizens on private wells.

- Avoid watering during the hottest part of the day, which is typically 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
- Avoid noncommercial washing of vehicles, boats, or other equipment.
- Run dishwashers and washing machines when full and avoid handwashing dishes.

For citizens on a public water system through FCWSA or a Town water system, please refer to their specific guidance at:

- <https://www.fcwsa.org>
- <https://www.warrentonva.gov>
- <https://www.remington-va.gov>

The County will continue to monitor DEQ guidance and warning advisories over the coming weeks. The County will issue updated guidance and restrictions, as advised by DEQ and in consultation with FCWSA and our Towns. The following provide specific guidance and protocols for Statewide and County level drought planning.

For DEQ: <https://www.deq.virginia.gov/our-programs/water/water-quantity/drought>

For Fauquier County's Comprehensive Drought Management and Emergency Preparedness Plan: <https://www.fauquiercounty.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/12951/638139461778070000>.

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**Warrenton, Virginia** – Potential Means of Water Conservation:

No matter what drought level Fauquier County is in, residents, businesses, communities and government agencies can, and should, critically evaluate and explore more efficient water conservation practices. The following list of water conservation practices is not intended to be a complete or exhaustive list, but rather to provide some examples of what can be done to conserve water:

- Use dishwaters only when they are full.
- Wash only full loads of laundry (adjust water level if possible).
- Turn off faucets while brushing teeth, shaving, etc. (saves about five gallons per day).
- Reduce water used per toilet flush by installing toilet tank displacement inserts. A plastic jug may be used as an alternative. [Note: do not use bricks. They disintegrate when soaked and the resulting grit hinders closing of the flap valve, causing leakage and subsequent water loss].
- Keep a bottle of water in the refrigerator, so as to limit the running of tap water to get cold water.
- If you have a water meter, monitor it to evaluate how much water you use and the timing of this use, so as to better inform you of how you may create additional water savings.
- Take shorter showers and baths (saves about 25 gallons per shower/bath).
- Do not use a garbage disposal.
- Do not use water to wash off driveways or sidewalks.
- Water before 10:00 a.m. to reduce evaporation during the hottest part of the day. Watering in the morning is better than the evening, because the dampness and coolness of the evening may promote fungal growth.
- When watering plants, use drip irrigation that directs water to the root system. If you do not have drip irrigation capabilities, then closely monitor your watering to ensure that the water is turned off when sufficient water has been delivered. Avoid run-off.
- When watering plants, water infrequently but thoroughly, because water penetrating deeper in the soil will be retained longer and it will encourage plants to grow deeper roots. Conversely, water from

frequent light waterings often is lost due to evaporation, and it encourages plants to grow in the shallow soil zones that dry out quickly causing greater plant stress and the need for additional waterings.

- Water lawns only when necessary [note: grass that springs back when stepped on does not need water].
- Install automatic shut-off nozzles on outdoor water hoses.
- Aerate lawns by punching small holes approximately six inches apart. This will encourage water to soak into the soil rather than run off the surface.
- Position manually-placed sprinklers so that they do not water pavement, gravel, buildings or other non-plant surfaces.
- Know how to turn off an automatic irrigation system in case of rain.
- Weed gardens so that more desirable plants do not have to compete for limited moisture.
- Mulch garden beds to reduce evaporative water loss and weed growth, and cool the soil, which in turn creates less water-stress to plants.
- During dry periods postpone new plantings, since new plantings often require a higher quantity of irrigation.
- Use trash cans to dispose of used tissues rather than flushing them down the toilet.
- Avoid mowing grass at a very short height, since more water evaporates from short grass than taller grass.
- Do not allow children to play water games.
- Encourage the use of rain barrels and other means to capture and re-use water.
- Turn off ornamental water fountains.
- Avoid irrigation of athletic fields.
- Discourage the filling or topping off outdoor swimming pools.
- Avoid washing car, boats, and other personal or recreational equipment.
- Serve water to restaurant patrons only upon request.

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