



CITY OF WINDER

GEORGE "CHIP" THOMPSON
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PURCHASING DIRECTOR

JOHN E. STELL
CITY ATTORNEY

Frequently Asked Questions February 6, 2008

The following Frequently Asked Questions were prepared by the Environmental Protection Division to assist water utilities, professional landscape installers and the general public in complying with new changes to outdoor water use requirements announced by Governor Sonny Perdue on February 6, 2008.

Water Utilities

Q: Along with modifying the restrictions for pools and landscaping, will the 10% below winter average modified permit limit be changed?

A: Yes, where drinking water supplies are sufficient, permit limits will be modified to 10% below 2007 average summer (April through September) water use in recognition that water use changes in the summer due to higher evaporation levels, water use for commercial air conditioning systems, watering for food gardens, summer activities, and other allowable water uses. We reiterate that "No outdoor water use is allowed, other than for activities exempted in 391-3-30-.05, or as the EPD Director may order" per 391-3-30-.04(6).

Q: How will this summer permit modification be implemented?

A: In February and March, EPD will consult with local governments, water utilities, and industries to determine that drinking water supplies are sufficient to allow the new permit limit be based on 10% below 2007 summer (April through September) water use. EPD will set a schedule for these consultations beginning with the largest and/or most at-risk utilities. The consultations will include discussions of 1) the projected status of the water supply through December 2009, 2) the water conservation measures being implemented, 3) per capita water use, 4) historical water use, and 5) other relevant factors.

The new permit limits will go into effect April 1, 2008. Enforcement actions for the months of January through March 2008 will be limited to those systems with 2008 usage that exceeds the 2006/2007 winter average.

Q: The State has modified the exemptions to outdoor watering and pools. Can local utilities do something different?

A: Local governments and water utilities may adopt restrictions that are more stringent than the restrictions imposed by the State (per 391-3-30-.06(1)).

Q: My utility has an ample water supply – can we relax restrictions? Can we get out of the Level 4 designation?

A: EPD is balancing three risk factors: 1) maintaining sufficient water supply during a prolonged drought period, 2) maintaining the economic viability of local communities throughout the state, and 3) maintaining the financial stability of local water providers. Upon request, EPD will work with individual utilities to determine if utility/location specific conditions exist that would allow further modifications to the restrictions. These discussions will be held after summer permit limits are established. Enforcement actions for the months of January through March 2008 will be limited to those systems with 2008 usage that exceeds the 2006/2007 winter average.



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Pools

Q: Will pools be able to open this season?

A: Yes. All existing indoor and outdoor pools will be allowed to open. Local governments and water utilities may adopt restrictions that are more stringent than the restrictions imposed by the State (per 391-3-30-.06(1)).

Q: Can I fill a plastic or vinyl wading pool for my children to play in?

A: Yes, subject to local restrictions, if any.

Q: What can I do to reduce the amount of water my pool uses?

A: The following are a few simple steps to use around the pool (Source: *California Urban Water Conservation Council at <http://www.cuwcc.org/home.html>*):

- Use a pool cover. It will reduce water loss due to normal evaporation. The cover can also reduce heating bills by preventing night heat loss and will save on chemicals too. Make certain that it fits properly. The cover is the number one water and fossil fuel conservation device! A recent study found that pool covers can reduce swimming pool water use by nearly 30% (Maddaus and Mayer, 2001).
- Repair any swimming pool leaks. Even a small leak in either pool equipment or the pool's structure represents a substantial waste. In fact, an inch-a-day leak in a 15-by-30 foot pool can waste approximately 102,000 gallons per year!
- If heated, reduce your pool and spa water temperature. Warmer water evaporates more quickly.
- Shut down unnecessary fountains and waterfalls. The effect of aeration loses a significant amount of water to evaporation.
- Manually clean your filter. You'll do a more thorough job and use less water. The average backwash uses between 250 to 1,000 gallons of water – without completely cleaning your filter!
- Install a newer, more water efficient filter system.
- Limit diving, splashing and water fights in your pool and spa. Boisterous play causes inordinate amounts of water loss due to splash-out.
- Maintain proper chemical levels and adequate circulation time. Not only will your pool water be safer and cleaner, but you'll avoid the need to drain your pool or use excessive water to correct conditions on neglect.



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Pools (continued)

Q: What can I do to reduce the amount of water my pool uses? (continued)

- A:**
- When filling your pool, be sure to keep an eye on your water level. Forgetting to shut off fill water can make for a costly waste of water
 - Plug the overflow line when the pool is in use. Keep the pool water in the pool.
 - Turn off the tile-spray device on your automatic pool cleaner. Its splashing invites evaporation losses, and over spraying can send water right out of the pool! A good idea of the spray evaporates before it hits the tile.

Q: Where can I get more information about how to reduce the amount of water my pool uses?

- A:** Additional information about water conservation for pools may be found at <http://www.conservewatergeorgia.net>.



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Outdoor Hand Watering

Q: What are the new requirements for outdoor hand watering?

A: Each household, business or other institution/property owner will be allowed to use one garden hose, 25 minutes a day, during designated hours on designated days to water plants only:

- The hose must be hand held during watering and equipped with a standard spray nozzle that automatically turns off when you let go of it.
- Within the hours of 12:00 midnight to 10:00 a.m.
- Odd-numbered addresses may water Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays
- Even-numbered addresses may water Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays

Local governments and water utilities may adopt restrictions that are more stringent than the restrictions imposed by the State (per 391-3-30-.06(1)).

Q: Can I use my allotted time to water for uses other than water plants such as outdoor washing or recreation?

A: No.

Q: What can I do to make sure I'm not wasting water?

A: While watering, aim the nozzle at the base of the plant to maximize delivery of water to the root system and minimize evaporative losses. For more tips on how to reduce water use while watering plants, please visit <http://www.conservewatergeorgia.net>.



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Newly Installed Landscape

Q: What are the current requirements for watering newly installed landscape?

A: Under the current requirements, "newly installed landscape" is landscaping which has been in place less than 30 days and was installed by a professionally certified or licensed landscaper, golf course contractor, or sports turf landscaper. Newly installed landscape may be watered during installation and for 30 days following installation. Watering may take place on any day of the week and during any time of the day.

Q: What are the new requirements for watering newly installed landscapes?

A: Under the new requirements, new landscaping installed by anyone may be watered as follows:

- By any person who has registered with the Outdoor Water Use Registration Program at <http://www.urbanagcouncil.com> beginning March 1, 2008.
- Within the hours of 12:00 midnight to 10:00 a.m.
- For 10 weeks consecutive weeks
- Odd-numbered addresses may water Tuesdays, Thursdays and Sundays
- Even-numbered addresses may water Mondays, Wednesdays and Saturdays

Local governments and water utilities may adopt restrictions that are more stringent than the restrictions imposed by the State (per 391-3-30-.06(1)).

Q: What does it take to become registered to water newly installed landscape?

A: If you have access to the internet, please go to <http://www.urbanagcouncil.com> beginning March 1, 2008. Look for the 'Water Conservation' tab or 'Outdoor Water Use Registration Program' tab.

If you do not have internet access, call the County Extension Agent in your county or inquire at your local retail plant store later this spring.

By successfully completing the registration program, you will better understand global water resources, Georgia's water resources, best landscape practices and proper watering techniques. After passing a test by at least 70%, you will 'register' and print a certificate to display in a prominent location on the property. You will also sign a pledge that you will reduce your overall water use by at least 10%.