



# Business Quarterly

www.ci.hurst.tx.us

Winter 2006

A Free Publication for Hurst Businesses

## Facts to ponder...

- Water use for two consecutive months has exceeded Tarrant Regional Water District's projected use by more than 25 percent.
- Fort Worth set monthly pumping records for September and October.
  - The FTW water department pumped 7.914 billion gallons of water in September and 7.055 billion gallons of water in October.
  - The previous records were 7.778 billion gallons for September and 5.552 billion gallons for October.



- The Tarrant County area is seriously deficient in rainfall for the year.
  - The area is minus 11 inches below average according to the National Weather Service. The below average rainfall and increased water usage have resulted in low levels in some area lakes.
  - Tarrant Regional Water District indicates the West Fork reservoirs are at 73 percent of capacity. The East Texas reservoirs are at 85 percent of capacity, and the entire system is at 82 percent of capacity.

Without significant rainfall this winter and spring, the Fort Worth and Hurst Water Utilities want customers to know that by this summer, more stringent water restrictions may be necessary.

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

FIRST CLASS MAIL  
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City of Hurst  
1505 Precinct Line Road  
Hurst, Texas 76054



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## Being water wise: Stage I of Drought Contingency Plan Triggered

Although there has been some rainfall lately, 2005 was the State's second driest year on record, and Texas is still in a drought condition. According to recent news reports, DFW area water authorities are considering whether to impose watering restrictions earlier than usual to stretch the supply in case the drought continues. Area reservoirs are at only 80 percent of their capacity and continuing to decrease despite the recent light rains.

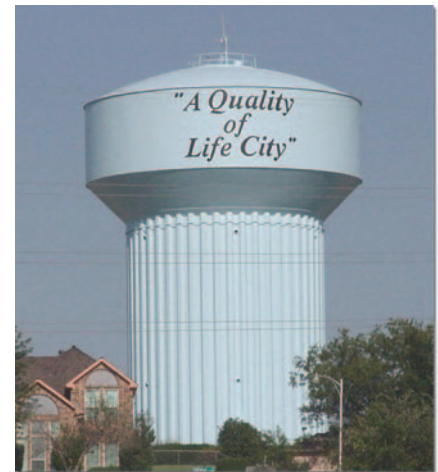
You may have seen signs in Hurst and other nearby cities that say, "Voluntary Water Conservation in Effect". These are part of the educational steps taken in Stage 1 of the City's Drought Contingency Plan. The Texas Water Code requires drought contingency plans of all sizable water suppliers/distributors, for example the City of Hurst. By law the contingency plans must have specific targets for water use reductions to be achieved during periods of drought and/or water shortages.

**Customers are asked to voluntarily use water as efficiently as possible in hopes of averting the need for mandatory restrictions in the coming months. Hurst customers, both businesses and residents, are asked not to water landscapes between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.**

As a water customer of the City of Fort Worth, Hurst must respond when Fort Worth implements portions of its drought contingency plan and initiate steps from our plan. That is where we are today, Stage 1 Voluntary Conservation, and this issue of the *Business Quarterly* focuses on water conservation, the contingency plan steps, and what Hurst's 1,250 businesses can and should do when water supplies are decreasing.

The message is simple and obvious: Our water supplies are limited; we are in a drought situation; and conservation measures are more important than ever. Please keep this issue and refer to it so that you and your business, including employees, will understand the Contingency Plan and be a wise user of water, especially during the current drought.

A complete copy of the Contingency Plan can be obtained at the front desk of City Hall or by calling 817 788-7206. It is also on the City web site at: [http://www.ci.hurst.tx.us/Publications/Publicworks/Water\\_DroughtPlanLM20051114.pdf](http://www.ci.hurst.tx.us/Publications/Publicworks/Water_DroughtPlanLM20051114.pdf)



### In this issue...

- ★ Drought Contingency Water Management Plan
- ★ Save money with a rain sensor
- ★ Avoid liability with a freeze sensor

# The Drought Contingency Water Management Plan

## Policy, Purpose, and Intent

- conserve the available water supply; protect the integrity of water supply facilities
- protect domestic water use, sanitation, fire protection, health, welfare, and safety
- determine non-essential uses to be discontinued during times of water shortage

## Public Education Emphasized

- The City of Hurst will periodically provide the public with information about the Plan in a.) Press releases b.) Utility bill inserts c.) City web page postings d.) Signage at strategic locations throughout the City e.) Educational brochures.

## How the Plan is Implemented

- The City Manager implements the Plan upon determination that such implementation is necessary to protect public health, safety, and welfare.
- The Plan applies to all persons, customers, and property utilizing water provided by the City of Hurst.
- Any stage may be rescinded when all of the conditions that triggered the stage have been alleviated.

## Criteria for Initiation and Termination and the Drought Response Stages

When to begin a particular stage depends on what our supplier, the City of Fort Worth has to do to protect the supply; short- or long-term deficiencies in the City of Hurst's system that could limit our supplies, for example broken pumps or broken lines; or daily water demand that exceeds a certain amount, for example 90 percent of the production capacity of the system for three (3) consecutive days triggers Stage 1.

## Enforcement

Violations of restrictions in Stages 2, 3, and 4 will result in a warning, and then a citation may be issued with a fine not to exceed \$1,000 per incident. There are further enforcement provisions explained in detail in the complete plan.

## Requirements for termination of any given stage

When all of the conditions listed as triggering events have ceased to exist.

## Non-essential water uses defined

Generally this means uses that are not required for the protection of public, health, safety, and welfare. This includes landscaped areas, parks, athletic fields, washing vehicles, sidewalks, parking lots, buildings, filling or refilling swimming pools, fountains, controllable leak(s), and construction other than fire fighting.

**STAGE 1** Stage 1 – Dry Conditions (Where we are in February 2006)

- Requests voluntary reduction in water use, including City landscapes.
- Accelerate public information efforts
- Work with major water users to achieve voluntary water use reduction.
- Prohibit city government use of water for street washing, vehicle washing, and all other non-essential use.
- Request no landscape watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.

**STAGE 2** Stage 2 – Water Watch (Little impact for most businesses, but situation worsens)

- Everyone asked to pay more attention to non-essential water uses as demand exceeds 95 percent capacity for 3 straight days or the City cannot refill storage tanks.
- Mandatory restrictions implemented, and enforced, and penalties are possible.
- A measurable reduction of 2 percent is expected.
- Prohibit hosing off paved areas, buildings and windows; ornamental fountains; swimming pool draining followed by refilling; washing or rinsing of any motor vehicles by hose; using water in such a manner as to allow runoff or other water waste; or the use of water for dust control.
- Some common sense exceptions are possible in Stage 2, for example vehicles may be washed or rinsed with a hose at commercial car washes and garbage trucks and vehicles used to transport food and perishables can be washed with hoses.
- Limit landscape watering at each service address to once every five (5) days based on the address, including apartments, office-building complexes.
- Require a reduction by local governments of non-essential water use and a reduction in landscape watering.

**STAGE 3** Stage 3 – Water Warning (Mandatory conservation widespread)

- Drought continues and demand exceeds 95 percent of production capacity for five (5) consecutive days, more water system failures, interruptions, delivery problems from Fort Worth to the City of Hurst water customers.
- 5 percent reduction in use becomes the goal; Engineering alternatives being used.
- Prohibit residential or commercial lawn watering and car washing between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Foundations, shrubs, and trees may be watered with a soaker or hand held hose on the same five (5) day rotational basis as landscapes.
- Public gardens may water, but not between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- Nurseries may water plant stock but not between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.
- No new landscaping may be established; No refilling of private pools

**STAGE 4** Stage 4 – Emergency Water Use Management (Unprecedented loss of capability)

- Daily water demand exceeds 100% of the production capacity of the system for three (3) consecutive days, major water line breaks, or pump or system failures occur, which cause unprecedented loss of capability to provide water service.
- Natural or man-made contamination of the water supply source(s) may have occurred even during non-drought time period.
- The Stage 4 goal for water use reduction is 10% below normal consumption.
- Prohibit all commercial and residential landscape watering with some exceptions for nurseries' plant stock, public gardens, and foundations
- All washing of motor vehicles is prohibited except garbage trucks and vehicles used to transport food and perishables.
- No new landscaping may be established during this period; no refilling of private pools; public pools may refill water lost to normal daily use.
- All commercial water users may be required to reduce water consumption by a percentage determined by the City Manager or his designee.

## Save Money with a Rain Sensor

A rain sensor is an irrigation shutoff device, wired to your system controller that PREVENTS an automatic irrigation or sprinkler system from turning on during and after a rainstorm. These devices override a scheduled irrigation when a water collection cup or sensor on the shutoff device detects water.

When the collected rainwater has evaporated from the device, scheduled irrigations resume. Rain sensors are simple, economical and useful tools for preventing irrigation that would be wasteful.

The device should be mounted in an open area outdoors where it will be exposed to unobstructed rainfall, but not in the path of sprinkler spray. It is typically installed near the roofline on the side of a building so that trees, overhangs and awnings are not blocking direct rainfall onto the rain sensor.

Studies in similar climates and local experience indicate that in north Texas rain sensors should reduce the amount of water used for lawn irrigation by about 25 percent. Savings like this will pay back sensor equipment and installation costs in as little time as a year, depending on the size of the irrigation system.

## Avoid Liability Issues with a Freeze Sensor

This type of sensor is very popular in commercial settings, where ice on walkways or streets can cause liability. Freeze sensors can have a place in the residential garden as well. Watering before or during heavy freezes can create problems with ice-laden shrubs and trees, as well as creating the same liability concerns the commercial user experiences.

Mounted on an outside wall, in a location most likely to experience freezing conditions, it will interrupt the signal to the control valves when temperatures fall below freezing. Once conditions improve, the system will return to normal operation.

## How much water will rain sensors save??

**Saves You Money** – Reduces your utility bill by overriding your irrigation system after adequate rainfall has been received.

**Saves Your System** – Reduces wear on your irrigation system because the system runs only when necessary.

**Protects your Lawn** – from too much watering.

**Conserves Water** – Rainfall is used to water your lawn instead of fresh drinking water.

**Conserves Community Resources** – Using less water also extends the life of the water treatment plant (if you use a municipal water system).