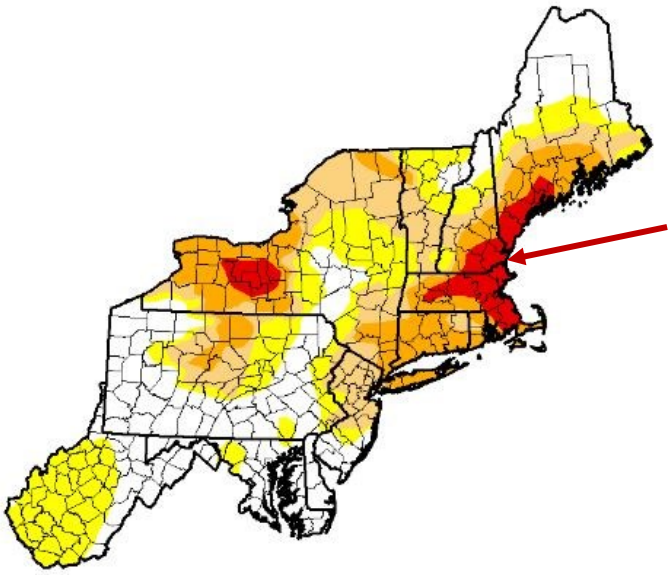
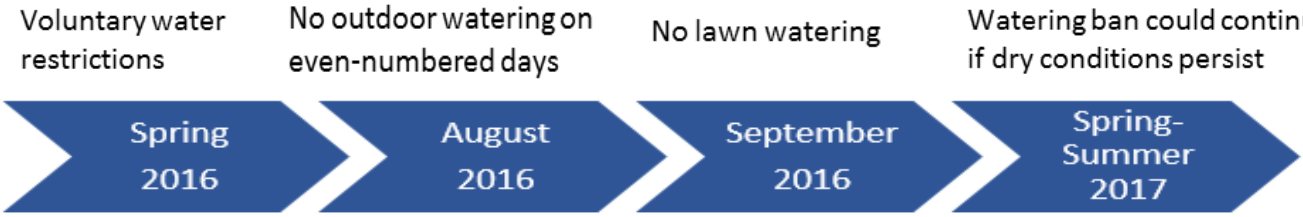
October 20, 2016

Portsmouth Water Supply Update



As you may be aware, the extreme drought conditions throughout 2016 have affected the Portsmouth Water System. This graphic shows how dry the seacoast area has been, according to the October 4, 2016 New England Drought Monitor. **The area in red shows Portsmouth in Extreme Drought.** The drought has caused stream levels to be at all-time low flows, depleting our reservoir's capacity and has also lowered groundwater availability to our wells.

The timeline below details the measures we have had customers take in order to reduce water demand to preserve our water supply.



These actions are not only in response to a dry summer, but the less than normal precipitation experienced in our area for over the past year. Fortunately, most of our water customers have complied with these restrictions, reducing water demands by 20-25 percent within a couple weeks of implementation.

While this is encouraging news, these measures may likely remain throughout the winter and into next summer unless we receive significant precipitation. The long-range forecast does not project any significant change in our current weather pattern, but that is not certain. However, as demonstrated in these initial water demand reductions, it is very important that the community complies with restrictions to help maintain ample water supply in our system. The back side of this flyer includes further information about improving water efficiency.

In order to continue to better inform our customers of water supply conditions the City of Portsmouth's water operations staff have developed a monthly "Water Supply Update" that includes a summary of our supply and demand conditions. This information is posted on the City's website at the link below.

For further information please visit the Department of Public Works' water page at:

www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks [water]

Water Efficiency Tips

The City of Portsmouth has a history of promoting water efficiency with past programs such as offering water conservation retrofit kits, rain barrels, monthly meter reading and our current program of providing customers with **$100 rebates for installing low-flow toilets and $150 rebates for replacing washing machines with high-efficiency units**. For additional information please check the City's website or call our billing department.

Here are six simple tips to improve outdoor water use efficiency:

1. **Check the time:** Water your yard in the morning or evening to avoid losing water to evaporation in the heat of the day.
2. **Get in the "hydro" zone:** Group the plants in your garden according to their water needs, also known as using "hydrozones," which reduce the risk of over watering your plants.
3. **Use mulch:** Adding mulch in your garden helps reduce evaporation, inhibit weed growth, moderate soil temperature, and prevent erosion.
4. **Keep control:** Upgrade to a WaterSense labeled controller, which acts like a thermostat for your sprinkler system using actual local weather conditions to tailor your watering schedule.
5. **Compost:** Instead of sending organic waste from your kitchen down the garbage disposal with water, add them to a compost pile. You can then use the compost as nutrient-rich soil to add to your garden. The Department of Public Works also offers a compost drop-off service at their Recycling Center.

WaterSense®

Commit to save water!

I'm for Water℠

Take the US EPA Watersense ***"I'm for Water"*** pledge and incorporate water efficiency measures into your everyday water use habits: **epa.gov/watersense/pledge**

Cold Weather Tips

Quick Tips to Prevent Water Line Freeze-ups:

- Insulate pipes in unheated areas.
- Open kitchen and bathroom cupboard doors to allow more heat to reach pipes in cold weather.
- Drain and shut off the water supply to the outside spigot/faucet. Wrapping outside spigots/faucets with fiberglass or molded foam-insulating covers offer good protection against freeze-ups .
- Shut off and drain any pipes that won't be used for extended periods.
- Make sure you know where your water line shutoff valve is located and test it at least once a year to make sure that it works.
- Run a faucet at a slow drip if they are in an unheated area indoors and it is very cold out.
- The City is responsible for water services from the water main to the customer's shutoff valve which is usually at the property line.
- The customer is responsible for the water line from the shutoff valve into the building and for assuring that the water meter is protected from damage caused by freezing and/or snow.

For more information please visit the City's water website at: www.cityofportsmouth.com/publicworks