




MEMORANDUM

TO: Mayor and Council Members

FROM: Robert Goode, Interim Director, Austin Water 

DATE: May 20, 2022

SUBJECT: Future Drought Response Stage One Regulations

Austin Water staff anticipate that in the near future, the combined storage of Lake Buchanan and Lake Travis will likely fall below 1.4 million acre-feet, triggering Drought Response Stage One Regulations, per the Council approved City of Austin's Drought Contingency Plan. The City has been under the base Water Conservation Stage watering restrictions since November 13, 2018.

As of the date of this memorandum, the combined storage of the two Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) water supply lakes is 1.43 million acre-feet. According to LCRA forecasts, the combined lakes storage volume is projected to drop below 1.4 million acre-feet in late May or June, depending on a combination of factors including future hydrologic conditions, evaporation, diversions, and releases.

The purpose of this memorandum is to make you aware of the potential for Drought Response Stage One Regulations and to provide a summary of the restrictions from the City's Drought Contingency Plan. The primary change between the Water Conservation Stage and Stage One is the reduction of automatic irrigation watering hours.

Stage One Watering Restrictions Summary for Residential and Commercial Customers

- Customers continue to follow the once-per-week watering schedule for automatic irrigation systems and the twice-per-week schedule for hose watering.
- Customers must reduce the total number of hours available for watering via automatic irrigation systems from 15 hours to 13 hours (Midnight to 8am and 7pm to midnight).
- Customers can continue the following irrigation activities without restrictions: athletic fields; drip irrigation; hand-held watering with hose; watering trees with automatic bubblers; automatic drip irrigation or with a soaker hose beneath the tree canopy and in vegetable gardens.

- Commercial customers continue to limit the use of patio misters to the hours between 4pm and midnight.
- Commercial car washes can operate normally. Residential car washes, and the washing of any outdoor surface, is allowed with the use of positive shut-off valve or a bucket.

Austin Water will begin informing the community of the reduction in water supply and the impending declaration of Stage One through press releases, social media, radio and television announcements, and updating our website with answers to frequently asked questions. In addition, Austin Water will continue its investigations of reported non-compliance received via Austin 3-1-1 and upon declaration will begin its enforcement activities through scheduled patrols.

Please contact Austin Water's Assistant Director of Environmental Planning and Development Services, Kevin Critendon, P.E., if you require additional information or have any questions.

cc: Spencer Cronk, City Manager
Gina Fiandaca, Assistant City Manager
Water and Wastewater Commission
Resource Management Commission