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City of Gloucester Announces New Restrictions on Outdoor Water Use

Mayor Greg Verga and the City of Gloucester wish to update the community on water use restrictions, and urge all residents and businesses to conserve water whenever possible.

The City is implementing an immediate two-week ban on all non-essential outdoor water use. This change means that hand watering, which had been permitted from 5 p.m. to 9 a.m. daily, is temporarily considered non-essential.

The Northeast Region of Massachusetts remains in a Level 3 Critical Drought. [Per MassDEP](#), this level of drought warrants such a ban on all non-essential outdoor water use. DEP considers “essential” water use as:

- for health or safety reasons
- by regulation
- for the production of food and fiber
- for the maintenance of livestock
- to meet the core functions of a business

Failure to adhere to the restrictions can lead to the imposition of fines. Residents who wish to report a violation are asked to call the Gloucester Police Department at 978-283-1212

The ban will be assessed at the end of the two-week period.

“This ban impacts those served by our municipal water supply, and not those who may have private wells,” Director of Public Works Michael Hale said. “However, we hope that private well owners will join in this effort, so that we may protect our groundwater sources that also are below normal levels.”

Drought conditions result in dry grass, shrubbery, and forest areas, as well as dry soil conditions, increasing the wildland fire risk. Cape Ann communities have seen multiple brush fires in recent weeks. Brush fires take multiple days to extinguish and exhaust local and regional resources.

All outdoor fires, including the use of outdoor fireplaces, firepits and chimineas, are prohibited during this time of critical drought. Residents are also asked to take care when disposing of combustible materials including the disposal of cigarettes.

Conservation tips

The City of Gloucester also shares the following tips from the Massachusetts Water Resources Commission on ways to conserve water:

- Limit lawn watering, especially during a drought. Lawns naturally go dormant during dry conditions. They will revive when conditions improve.
- Maintain healthy soils.
- Choose native plants or plants and turf that need less water.
- Use mulch to reduce evaporation and moderate soil temperature.
- Leave grass clippings on lawns to shade and return nutrients to soil.
- Sweep driveways, walkways, patios and other outdoor areas with a broom rather than hosing them off.
- Wash vehicles using a bucket and sponge employing a hose with a shut off nozzle for rinsing only, or, if available, use a commercial car wash that recycles water (most do).
- Cover swimming pools when not in use to prevent evaporation.
- Choose high-efficiency plumbing products and appliances.
- Turn off water while brushing teeth or shaving (“never let the water run”).
- Take shorter showers and use water-saving showerheads.
- Wash only full loads of laundry and dishes.
- Fix leaky faucets, toilets and pipes as soon as you notice them.
- Create a kitchen compost bin instead of using the garbage disposal.

About The City of Gloucester, Massachusetts

America's oldest seaport, the City of Gloucester, is known throughout the world as an authentic, working waterfront community, a place of spectacular natural beauty, and home to a diverse population of approximately 30,000 residents. Its sharp focus on economic development has helped build its reputation as the ideal location to live, work, and play. An important center for the fishing industry, Gloucester is also proud of its vibrant cultural life and rich art heritage. Gloucester is a destination for thousands of visitors who visit the harbor and its beaches during the summer months. The City will be celebrating its 400th Anniversary in 2023. For more information, please visit www.gloucester-ma.gov.