



**For Immediate Release:  
September 29, 2022**

**Media Contact:**

Robert Mills

Phone: 617-993-0003

Email: robert@jgpr.net

**City of Gloucester Extends Ban On All Non-Essential Outdoor Water Use, Lifts Ban on Outdoor Fires**

GLOUCESTER – Mayor Greg Verga and the City of Gloucester report that a temporary ban on all non-essential outdoor water use is being extended through the end of October, and that a ban on outdoor fires is being lifted.

Recent rains have helped reduce fire danger by wetting soil and brush, so the ban on outdoor fires is being lifted to allow burning in accordance with City regulations. Reservoirs continue to be low, so the ban on non-essential outdoor water use is being extended to help maintain a reliable water supply.

The City implemented a two-week ban on all non-essential outdoor water use due to drought conditions beginning on Sept. 1.

Outdoor burning with a chiminea or outdoor fireplace is once again allowed without a permit from the fire department as long as residents meet the following conditions laid out in [city ordinances](#):

- The fire and/or smoke does not pose a hazard to any property;
- The smoke does not create a nuisance or health hazard in the neighborhood;
- Only ordinary firewood shall be burned in the chiminea or outside fireplace; no construction debris, leaves, household trash, hazardous waste, or chemicals may be burned at any time;
- The chiminea or outdoor fireplace shall be on a non-combustible surface at grade-level (i.e. not on a deck) and is not under any type of overhang, roof, or canopy;
- A water supply or fire extinguisher capable of extinguishing the fire is within 75 feet of the chiminea or outdoor fireplace;
- The fire shall be constantly attended by a competent person until the fire is extinguished;
- Fires shall not be located within 25 feet of a structure or combustible material;
- All conditions that could cause fire to spread from the area adjacent to the device shall be eliminated prior to ignition;

- Flammable liquids shall not be used to ignite the fire.
- The fire chief or his designee may order any outside fire permitted by this section to be extinguished in response to a complaint or hazardous condition.

Despite some recent rainfall, drought conditions persist and the City’s water capacity remains at just 48 percent. The status of the ban will be reevaluated on Nov. 1. The ban may be lifted if conditions change significantly before the end of the month.

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.

“I want to thank our residents and business owners for their cooperation throughout this drought, and ask that we all do our part to maintain a reliable water supply,” said Mayor Verga. “Despite drought conditions persisting and affecting the water supply, fire danger has been reduced by recent, much-needed rainfall, so we are lifting the ban on outdoor fires in accordance with city ordinances. We ask residents to be responsible when burning and to prioritize safety.”

### ***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](http://www.gloucester-ma.gov).