



PRESS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

For more information contact:

Anitra Hendrix

Birmingham Water Works

Phone: (205) 244-4220

Email: anitra.hendrix@bwwb.org

PRESS RELEASE

STAGE FOUR – “EXTREME DROUGHT EMERGENCY”

Birmingham Water Works Moves to the Next Level in its Drought Response

(BIRMINGHAM, Ala. – November 3, 2016) On November 4, 2016, drought management actions of the Birmingham Water Works (BWW) will move to the next higher level of response, **Stage Four – “Extreme Drought Emergency”**. The extended dry weather, record high temperatures, and no measurable rain in the next 10 day forecast places the storage supply of the utility’s Lake Purdy reservoir in a precarious position for the remainder of the year. Customers have reduced their demand for water from 115 million gallons per day (MGD) to 105 MGD since the October 19th introduction into the Stage Three “Drought Warning” phase of the Drought Management Plan (DMP). “This was a very significant reduction and shows that the customers of the Birmingham Water Works are supportive of the message to reduce their water usage.” said Darryl R. Jones, Assistant General Manager of Operations and Technical Services for the BWW. “We also believe that we should continue to emphasize to our customers the severity of this weather crisis and engage them to help manage the demands for water until adequate rain returns to this area.” The goal of this Extreme Drought Emergency is to further reduce system wide water use by 5 percent from the rate of use observed in Stage Three.

Elements of the Stage Four – “Extreme Drought Emergency” phase of the BWW’s drought management plan continues to ask customers to practice conservation measures as recommended in stages one, two, and three of the DMP. Under Stage Four guidelines, just like in Stage Three, the first 12 hundred cubic feet (ccf) or 8,977 gallons of water used by residential customers will not be subjected to any surcharges. All water consumption billed above 12 ccf will be charged the normal rate for all water used; however, they will be billed an additional surcharge of 400% per ccf on top of the normal rate for all water used above 12 ccf.

The surcharge is a separate charge and is in addition to the normal charges for water. The average residential customer uses less than 10 ccf (7,500 gallons) of water per month.

The BWW announced their Stage Three “Drought Warning” on October 19th with the 200% surcharges projected to start thirty days later on November 19th. Since the BWW has escalated the drought response to a higher level within the DMP prior to November 19th, the Stage Three surcharges will be suspended and not billed starting on November 19th; however, the new higher surcharges of 400% will begin thirty days after the announcement of Stage Four “Extreme Drought Emergency” on November 4th. Therefore, meter readings conducted on December 4th and later will be subjected to Stage Four surcharges for those residential customers that exceed 12 ccf and for non-residential (commercial) customers that exceed 110% of their average monthly usage. Surcharges will remain in place until the utility moves back into the Stage Two phase of the DMP.

Please refer to the chart below for our current rates, as well as drought surcharge rates.

Customer Class	Current Rate	Stage 3 Surcharge (200%)	Stage 4 Surcharge (400%)
Residential			
1-3 ccf	\$2.27	\$0.00	\$0.00
4-15 ccf	\$2.69	\$5.38	\$10.76
>15 ccf	\$4.01	\$8.02	\$16.04
Non-Residential	\$3.51	\$7.02	\$14.04
Raw Water	\$0.894	\$1.788	\$3.576

In other words, such a customer’s bill would amount to:

$$\begin{aligned}
 & \text{CCFs } 3 \times \$2.27 \text{ (normal rate for this usage amount)} \\
 & \quad + \\
 & \text{CCFs } 12 \times \$2.69 \text{ (normal rate for this usage amount)} = \\
 & \quad \text{\$39.09} \\
 & \quad + \\
 & \text{3CCF} \times \$10.76 \text{ (Stage Four 400\% surcharge)} = \$32.28 \\
 & \quad + \\
 & \text{5/8}^{\text{th}} \text{ Inch Meter Base Charge (\$24.25)}
 \end{aligned}$$

\$95.62 TOTAL

For example, a residential customer using 15 CCF per month (11,220 gallons per month) will be billed at the normal rate for those 15 CCF, but will also be billed a surcharge of 400% for the 3 additional CCFs they went over 12CCF.

Non-residential (commercial) and raw water customers will be charged the normal rate for all water used and will incur surcharges of 400 percent for any water used above 110% of their monthly annual average billing.

Nonresidential customers with normal use of 20 CCF (18,000 gallons per month) will be allowed to use 22CCF (19,800 gallons per month) with no surcharge.

For example, if the customer above uses 30 CCF (27,000 gallons per month), then they will be charged the normal rate for those 30CCF, as well being charged at 400% for the 8 CCF they went above 22CCF.

**In other words, such a customer's bill
would amount to:**

$$\begin{aligned} & 30\text{CCF} \times \$3.51 \text{ (normal rate)} = \$105.3 \\ & \qquad \qquad \qquad + \\ & 8\text{CCF} \times \$14.04 \text{ (400\% surcharge)} = \$112.32 \\ & \qquad \qquad \qquad + \\ & 1\text{inch Meter Base Charge} (\$48.40) \\ & \hline & \mathbf{\$266.02 \text{ TOTAL}} \end{aligned}$$

The entire DMP can be reviewed on the web-site at <https://www.bwwb.org/droughttips> ; however, key components of the plan are listed here for quick reference:

- The Birmingham Water Works will increase the surcharges for excessive water use to 400% of the normal charges.
- Municipalities will be requested to adopt and implement their Drought Management Ordinance, Extreme Emergency Stage and enforce the watering rules within their communities.
- Under the BWW Stage Four “Extreme Drought Emergency” guidelines, customers are asked to only hand water established lawns and landscapes using a hose with a nozzle one day per week. Addresses ending in an even number shall water on Mondays, while addresses ending in an odd number shall water on Fridays.
- No watering shall be conducted between 8 a.m. and 8 p.m. on the allowable watering day.

- No outside watering shall be conducted on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays.
- New lawns and landscaping are exempt from the day of the week watering restrictions for the first 20 days after installation. After the 20th day, hand watering should be in accordance with the even and odd schedule and watering criteria with a hose.
- The washing of personal vehicles shall be suspended unless conducted at a commercial car wash.
- Fire Hydrants. Unless exempted, the use of fire hydrants for any purpose except for firefighting or flushing sewers for health protection purposes shall be suspended.
- Golf courses that are supplied water by BWW are asked to restrict watering to tees and greens only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays between the hours of 1 a.m. and 5 a.m. This does not apply to golf courses with private water sources.
- Exemptions made for select commercial outdoor water users. (See Stage Four “Extreme Drought Emergency” Exemptions in DMP)
- Athletic fields may be watered Wednesdays and Saturdays between 4 a.m. and 9 a.m. or when determined that said fields are hazardous to the health and safety of children and athletes, by being too hard by virtue of a lack of water.

Founded in 1951, the Birmingham Water Works serves over 600,000 people in Jefferson, Shelby, Blount, St. Clair and Walker Counties. For more information about your Birmingham Water Works, please call us at [\(205\) 244-4000](tel:2052444000) or visit our Web site at www.bwwb.org.
