



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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DROUGHT WARNING ADVISORY DECLARATION

Drought Warning advisory for 7 counties in Virginia

Richmond, Va. -- In response to an ongoing significant drought event the Virginia Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) has issued a drought warning advisory for the Shenandoah Drought Evaluation Region.

Affected Drought Evaluation Region and localities include:

- Shenandoah: Augusta, Rockingham, Shenandoah, Frederick, Page, Warren, and Clarke Counties

DEQ is sending notifications to all local governments, public water works and private sector water users in the affected areas, and is requesting that they immediately address the significant drought event. Local governments are encouraged to review existing ordinances requiring mandatory non-essential water use restrictions or adopt such ordinances. Through the drought warning advisory, Virginia is encouraging localities to voluntarily take these steps to help protect current water supplies:

- Minimize nonessential water use, including the elimination of non-essential flushing of water lines.
- Review existing or develop new local water conservation and drought contingency plans and take conservation actions consistent with those plans.
- Include water conservation information on local websites and distribute water conservation information as broadly as possible.
- Initiate voluntary water conservation requirements contained in water conservation and contingency plans.
- Continue monitoring the condition of public waterworks and self-supplied water systems in partnership with the Virginia Department of Health.
- Impose mandatory water use restrictions if and when consistent with local water supply conditions.
- Aggressively pursue leak detection and repair programs

A drought warning intends to increase awareness that the onset of a significant drought event is imminent. This notice is being issued because drought-warning indicators in the [Drought Assessment and Response Plan](#) have been met. According to the Virginia Drought Monitoring Task Force, an interagency group representing state and federal agencies, the primary factors contributing to the declaration of the drought warning include:

- Streamflow in the region is currently in a severe hydrologic drought with flows below the 5th percentile
- Groundwater levels monitored by the climate response network of wells are currently below the 5th percentile. Providing limited base flow to support streamflow.
- Impacts to agriculture producers and public water suppliers including the Town of Strasburg and City of Harrisonburg have been reported and are being monitored daily.
- Below normal chances of precipitation is forecasted for the next 6-10 day period.
- Above average chance of above normal temperatures for the next 6-10 day period.

The next stage after a drought warning would be a “Drought Emergency” which would be declared via Executive Order by the Governor’s Office if conditions warrant. Drought emergency responses are required during the height of a significant drought event. Mandatory water conservation and contingency plans that are already in place or have been prepared during earlier drought stages must be implemented during drought emergency. [A list containing mandatory non-essential water use restrictions that become effective during a Drought Emergency may be viewed by following this link.](#)

See the current drought status on the [DEQ website.](#)

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About DEQ

The Virginia Department of Environmental Quality protects and enhances Virginia’s environment and promotes the health and well being of the citizens of the commonwealth. We are committed to cleaner water, improved air quality and the productive re-use of contaminated land.

For more information, please visit www.DEQ.Virginia.gov.

