

# EMERGENCY DROUGHT CONTINGENCY PLAN

## Background

California finds itself in a historic drought, and surface water rights holders have borne the brunt of the drought's impacts. While the Town of Fort Jones relies on groundwater for the health and safety of its residents, our watershed is interconnected. Depleted aquifers can lead to low river levels, impacting our neighbors who rely on surface water to survive, and inviting valley-wide water restrictions from the State of California. Therefore, any actions taken by the Town of Fort Jones to conserve water will benefit not only residents of the Town, but all residents of Scott Valley.

The following Water Conservation and Drought Contingency Plan is intended to create guidelines as well as a plan for water conservation in the Town of Fort Jones. The plan is currently a proposal and, thus, subject to revision as appropriate. Ultimately, the City Council will develop enforceable ordinances to ensure that all Fort Jones residents have access to an adequate water supply. This document is intended to be used as a guideline as the City Council develops appropriate ordinances in the future.

The availability of potable water must meet minimum health and safety allocation for human consumption, sanitation and fire protection needs. It is also understood the City's water supply is finite and will fluctuate based on the water year. Per California's Water Code "*the governing body of a distributor of a public water supply, whether publicly or privately owned and including a mutual water company, shall declare a water shortage emergency condition to prevail within the area served by such distributor whenever it finds and determines that the ordinary demands and requirements of water consumers cannot be satisfied without depleting the water supply of the distributor to the extent that there would be insufficient water for human consumption, sanitation, and fire protection.*" (Division 1. General State Powers Over Water [100-540] (Enacted in 1943, Ch. 368; Amended by Stats. 2018, Ch. 14, Sec. 1. (SB 606), effective January 1, 2019.)

## Purpose of Plan

To ensure the integrity of the City's water supply for the near and long term, the purpose of this Water Conservation Plan is to promote the wise and responsible use of water as a scarce and valuable resource by: (1) encouraging programs to minimize waste; (2) supporting public education programs that promote water conservation and a better public understanding of water usage; and (3) working through the City Council to develop, adopt, and implement water conservation policies and ordinances that help the Town meet its mandate of delivering an adequate water quantity for the needs of the Town's residences, businesses and schools and for fire protection in a manner consistent with the law.

## **Water Conservations Actions**

This Plan includes three Water Conservation Levels that have been identified. These levels are set by the use of triggers developed to reflect the availability of water resources.

The three water conservation levels of the Town of Fort Jones water supply will be determined by static well level readings at the Fort Jones Pump. This information will be used as the initial trigger to establish the Level in which the Town finds itself. At some future date, the Water Conservation Levels may be subject to curtailment by the California State Water Resources Control Board.

## **Public Education and Notification**

The Town will notify residents of changing conditions through bill messages, newsletters, emails, website updates, and Facebook postings and provide relevant information regarding the personal conservation strategies.

## **Water Conservation Levels:**

The different water conservation levels are as follows:

**Level I - Water Awareness (Yellow) - Voluntary Conservation Measures:** Voluntary conservation is the normal mode of operation. Level I measures will apply when the static well reading at the Fort Jones Pump is between 23 and 29 feet. Voluntary conservation measures are proposed in this stage to embed water efficiency programs into the fabric of the community and achieve permanent reductions in per capita water use. The Town's primary tool for achieving long-term reductions in water use is public education to encourage the formation of water-saving habits and installation of water-saving fixtures. Since the community's structures tend to be older, the Town encourages customers to update to modern, low-flow, high-efficiency water fixtures and appliances.

The following measures are recommended to encourage prudent water use, as an unreasonable waste of water is discouraged at all times:

### **Water Line Leak Detection**

- 1. *Minor leaks*** - The goal should be for both the Town and its residents, to identify and repair minor leaks within 48 hours.
  - 2. *Major leaks*** - The goal should be to identify and repair major leaks within 8 hours.
- Infrastructure*** - The goal should be to identify and pursue opportunities to enhance and upgrade the service infrastructure whenever possible to minimize waste on a system wide scale.

**Outdoor Landscaping** - Outdoor water use for landscaping most often represents the highest water use for residential users. As such, conservation efforts in the city should encourage droughttolerant landscaping.

1. ***Watering Hours*** - Use of potable water to irrigate turf and landscape vegetation is discouraged between the hours of 10:00 AM and 6:00 PM.
2. ***Irrigated Turf Area*** - Minimize the amount of irrigated turf in new development to permanently reduce system-wide per capita water use.
3. ***Irrigation Control Systems*** - New and renovated irrigation systems should include automatic timers and rain or soil moisture sensors that can automatically override the timer control of the sprinkler system.
4. ***Drip Irrigated Area*** - Drip irrigation is more efficient than spray for many applications, especially those where bushes, flowers, gardens and areas of unusual shape are being irrigated.
5. ***Sidewalk and Driveway Design*** - Lot design should be configured such that spray irrigation does not overspray and pavement areas. Landscape areas can be designed to catch any runoff instead of allowing water to drain off.
6. ***Landscape Plants*** – Seek to use low water using plants that are drought tolerant.

#### **Individual water conservation habits**

1. ***Bathroom*** - Turn off water while brushing teeth and shaving. Bathe using half-full tubs and take shorter showers.
2. ***Piping*** - Insulate hot water heaters and pipelines to reduce the time needed to get hot water at the tap.
3. ***Kitchen*** - Store drinking water in refrigerator and run dishwasher only when full.
4. ***Laundry*** - Purchase high-efficiency appliances and wash full loads of laundry.
5. ***Watering Hours*** – Watering during the heat of the day allows for high evaporation rates, therefore watering should be done before 10:00am and after 6:00pm.
6. ***Drip Irrigation*** - Use drip irrigation wherever possible for deep watering of trees, bushes, flowers and gardens.
7. ***Hose Shutoff Valves*** - Equip hoses with a shutoff valve that requires hand pressure to open.
8. ***Exterior Cleaning*** - Sweep patios, sidewalks, driveways, and other hard exterior surfaces.
9. ***Car Washing*** - Use spray from a hose equipped with a shutoff valve and/or a bucket of water to wash cars.
10. ***Hot Water Lines Insulation*** - Insulating hot water lines or installing a recirculation pump in new construction will reduce heat losses and the amount of time the water has to ‘run’ before it gets to the proper temperature. Pipe insulation can save both water and energy.

- 11. Thermostatic Mixing Devices** - By running the hot water and cold-water lines into a single mixing valve, the person taking a shower can set and get the target water temperature much more quickly, especially when the hot water line is insulated.
- 12. Water Saving Devices** - Install low-flow devices and flow restrictions for high use fixtures like shower heads and install updated, low flush toilets and low water use appliances.
- 13. Plumbing Repairs** - Promptly repair any leaking fixtures. Test your plumbing by carefully checking the water meter reading and then turning off all water using devices. After 30 to 60 minutes, check if the meter has recorded any usage. Toilets can be checked by placing a drop of food coloring in the water tank and checking in 30 minutes for any coloration of water in the bowl. Toilets are responsible for some of the most common household leaks.
- 14.** It is recommended that potable water for car washing, construction, compaction, dust control, street or building wash-down be from a hose equipped with a shutoff valve and/or a bucket of water for washing. Similarly, patios, sidewalks, driveways and other hard exterior surfaces ought to be swept rather than sprayed with water.

**At Level I, the Town shall take the following actions:**

1. The City Hall staff will engage with the public to encourage voluntary water conservation.
2. The City Hall Staff will investigate additional ways to conserve water both at the household level and at the city level.

**Level II - Water Shortage (Orange) - Mandatory Conservation Measures:** Mandatory Conservation Measures shall apply when the static water level reading at the Fort Jones Pump is between 30 and 44 feet.

Immediate action is necessary in Level II. The City's primary tool for achieving short-term reductions in water use is to declare a water emergency and enact mandatory Level II restrictions to drastically reduce water consumption. The goal is to protect the health, safety and welfare of the public and to ensure that the minimum water needs for the Town's residents are met.

Please note that restrictions other than those identified below may be necessary during prolonged or extreme drought conditions to safeguard the adequacy of the water supply for essential uses. Additional restrictions may include limitations on new connections, water shortage pricing, limitations on non-essential water use, installation of flow restriction devices for excessive use customers or other measures deemed necessary by the City Council.

Penalties for unnecessary water usage may be enacted by the City Council.

**All water conservation measures contained in previous levels apply to Level II.**

**Regulations and Restrictions** The following mandatory conservation measures will be in effect.

1. No customer shall waste water. Any of the following acts or omissions, whether intentional, unintentional, willful or negligent, shall constitute the wasteful use of water:
  - a) Water flowing away from a property caused by excessive application(s) of water beyond reasonable or practical irrigation rates, duration of application, or other than incidental applications to impervious surfaces.
  - b) Causing or permitting any amount of water to discharge, flow, run to waste into or flood any gutter, sanitary sewer, water course or storm drain, or to any adjacent lot, from any tap, hose, faucet, pipe, sprinkler, or nozzle.
  - c) Maintaining ponds, waterways, decorative basins or swimming pools without water recirculation devices or with known leaks, both seen and unseen.
  - d) Discharging water from, and refilling, swimming pools, decorative basins or ponds in excess of the frequency reasonably necessary to maintain the health, maintenance or structural considerations of the pool, basin or pond, as determined by Code Enforcement.
  - e) Continued operation of an irrigation system that applies water to an impervious surface.
  - f) Use of a water hose not equipped with a control nozzle capable of completely shutting off the flow of water except when positive pressure is applied.
  - g) Irrigation of lawns or landscaping when it is raining.
  - h) Overfilling of any pond, pool or fountain which results in water discharging from the pond, pool or fountain.
  - i) Failure to repair customer pipes, faulty sprinklers or other water-related fixtures that leak water within five working days, unless the director informs the customer that the leak must be repaired more quickly, in which case the customer shall repair the leak in the time specified by the City.
  - j) Irrigating lawns or landscaping between the hours of 10:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., with the exception of drip irrigation.
  - k) Outdoor watering exceeding 1 hour total duration.
  - l) Using potable water from the city water system for compaction, dust control or other construction purposes without first obtaining approval from the City.
  - m) Installing a single pass cooling system, such as a water-cooled air compressor, in any property that is newly connected to the city water system. This does not apply to evaporative cooling systems.
  - n) Use of potable water for street or building washdown.

**At Level II, the Town shall investigate the following conservation measures:**

1. The acquisition of additional water storage tanks
2. Incentive programs for the installation of water-saving devices in local households
3. Incentive programs for residents who replace lawns with water-efficient landscaping
4. Tiered water rates

**Level III - Water Emergency (Red) - Maximum Conservation Measures:** Maximum Conservation Measures begin when the static water level as measured at the Fort Jones Pump reads 45 feet or lower. Maximum conservation measures shall limit residential use to 280 gallons per day per residence, as measured at the water meter. Assumption is that the City's residences average 4 people, at 70 gallons per person per day. Penalties for unnecessary water usage may be enacted by the City Council.

**Water Use Restrictions**

If Level III is determined at any time, the Town of Fort Jones City Council and Staff will immediately notify its residences via letters, emails, bill notifications, and Facebook posts. Additionally, a special meeting will be held with the intent to issue a rate increase for excessive water use. Any said rate increase would stay in effect until the static well level at the Fort Jones Pump rose into Level II status. Other restrictions deemed necessary to safeguard the adequacy of the water supply for the Town of Fort Jones are subject to change if conditions warrant additional water conservation measures. Public Works staff and the Code Enforcement Officers have full authority to issue penalty notices when seeing violations.

**All water conservation measures contained in previous levels apply to Level III.**

The following water use restrictions apply for the severity of the conditions as described above:

**Regulations and Restrictions**

1. Residential use limited to 280 gallons per day per residence, as measured at the watermeter. Assumption is that the City's residences average 4 people, at 70 gallons per person.
2. Restaurants and food service establishments shall serve water to customers only upon specific request.
3. Penalty for excess water use shall be issued on the connection's water bill.
4. The following sprinkler use restrictions will take effect:
  - Outdoor watering during periods of rain shall be prohibited.
  - Outdoor watering shall be limited to 30 minutes total duration per day.

- Customers with odd-numbered street addresses – ending in 1, 3, 5, 7 or 9 – are allowed to use their sprinkler systems on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.
- Customers with even-numbered street addresses – ending in 0, 2, 4, 6, or 8 – are allowed to use their sprinkler systems on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays.
- Watering with sprinklers is limited to the following:
- All outdoor watering is prohibited from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., regardless of the watering day.
- Street addresses ending in fractions or letters are treated as whole numbers and observe the same day restrictions as others on their same side of the street (i.e.: “405 ½”, or “405 A” is regarded as 405, an odd-numbered address.)
- Residents are encouraged to cut grass to maximum height, convert all non-lawn landscaped areas to drip irrigation systems, and work to establish water sprinkler pressures of 45 pounds per square inch (psi).

### **Other Water Users**

Schools, parks, churches, and pools shall use water in a reasonable way so as not to directly or indirectly harm the City’s ability to meet minimum health and safety allocation for human consumption, sanitation and fire protection needs. The City reserves the rights to impose additional water conservation measures to individual water users who are deemed to have an excessive and/or unreasonable use of water.

### **Unauthorized Water Use**

Unauthorized use of a fire hydrant, public or private, for anything other than fire suppression efforts is not permitted at any time or any water level.

### **Fire and Other Emergencies**

Nothing in this plan limits or may be construed as limiting the availability of water for extinguishing fires, meeting the demands of any other similar emergency, or routine inspection and maintenance of fire hydrants.