

TO: Citizens of Abilene
CC: City Commission and City Employees
FROM: David Dillner, City Manager
SUBJ: Water Emergency Implementation Plan
DATE: April 22, 2013

Per Section 7-1007 of the City Code, the City Manager is authorized to promulgate such regulations as may be necessary to implement the provisions of Chapter 7, Article 10 of the City Code concerning water conservation when a Water Emergency has been declared by the City Commission. The purpose of this memorandum is to communicate to the City Commission and the general public implementation plan that will be enacted during the Water Emergency.

A Water Emergency is declared pursuant to Section 7-1003(c) of the City Code as follows: *“whenever the Governing Body finds that an emergency exists by reason of a shortage of water supply needed for essential uses, it shall be empowered to declare, by resolution, that a Water Emergency exists and that it will impose mandatory restrictions on water use during the period of the Water Emergency. Such a Water Emergency shall be deemed to continue until it is declared by resolution of the Governing Body to have ended. The resolutions declaring the existence and end of a Water Emergency shall be effective upon their publication in the official City newspaper.”*

As of April 22, 2013, the City of Abilene has been in a declared Water Warning for 287 consecutive days. With the adoption of Resolution No. 042213-5, the City of Abilene declared a Water Emergency because objective criteria established by staff justify the need to declare a Water Emergency. The City Manager has prepared the following implementation plan outlining the process for the use of mandatory conservation measures during the Water Emergency. City employees are hereby authorized to implement the provisions of this memorandum that are applicable to the level of Water Emergency that is currently in effect.

The City of Abilene will issue an official press release notifying the public when a criteria, as defined below as triggers, have been reached requiring the implementation of additional mandatory conservation measures as provided for the specific level of water emergency. The City will also use other communication tools to notify the public a new level is implemented. Such measures will include the City’s website (www.abilenecityhall.com), the City’s Facebook account, and local radio broadcasts. Other means may also be used to communicate the decision to implement water conservation requirements.

At this time, the City of Abilene does not have the authority to regulate private wells. The City requests all residents with private wells to voluntarily comply with mandatory water conservation regulations.

LEVEL 1: The following actions will be implemented by the City of Abilene:

- Emergency water rate for water use above 15,000 gallons implemented per Section 7-1006 of the City Code. The City will double the normal water rates, as defined by Sections 7-901 and 7-910 of the City Code. In addition, the water rate structure would be modified to an increasing block rate instead of the current decreasing block rate structure to discourage outside watering. Water rates would increase as follows:

Residential Inside City:

- Monthly Usage Rate: 15,001 gallons or more billed at \$0.65 per 100 gallons

Residential Outside City:

- Monthly Usage Rate: 15,001 gallons or more billed at \$1.30 per 100 gallons

Commercial Inside City:

- Monthly Usage Rate: 225,001 gallons or more billed at \$0.3250 per 100 gallons

Commercial Outside City:

- Monthly Usage Rate: 225,001 gallons or more billed at \$0.650 per 100 gallons

- New service connection fees as defined by Section 7-802 of the City Code would be doubled. New service connection fees are currently established to collect the approximate true cost of connecting a water service to the public water system. Such fees are based on the size of the water meter being installed; larger meters required more materials and labor and comparatively cost more than a typical water service. Doubling the connection fees would discourage new connections, but would not necessarily prohibit them from occurring.

Inside City:

- ¾-inch service and meter: \$2,000
- 1-inch service and meter: \$2,400
- 2-inch service and meter: Actual cost plus 50%

Outside City:

- ¾-inch service and meter: \$3,000
- 1-inch service and meter: \$3,500
- 2-inch service and meter: Actual cost plus 50%

- Suspension of bulk water sales, fire hydrant flushing, washing of the City fleet, rinse-out and inspection water tower maintenance, and new tree plantings by City.
- The waste of water would be strongly discouraged. Per Section 7-1002(c), any water identified as being permitted to escape down a street, roadway, or other surface intended for vehicular driving purposes, and any gutter, ditch, or other surface drain, or the failure to repair a controllable leak of water due to defective plumbing shall be enforced at the discretion of authorized officials; any individual, business, or organization that is determined to waste water under this definition may receive a warning or citation at the discretion of authorized officials. The Abilene Police Department shall be authorized to issue warnings or citations at their discretion to enforce this section of City Code.

Level 1 Triggers (this level would be “triggered” if any one of the following are met):

- Depth of 4.5 feet of water in Well No. 1;
- Operating Water Treatment Plant at peak production for eighteen consecutive hours a day; or
- Average depth of Sand Springs water table below six feet.

LEVEL 2: The following actions will be implemented by the City of Abilene:

- Rationing of Class I use to every third day for public and private use. The City will require rationing of all Class I use of water to the hours of 3:00 am and 6:00 am every third day for water customers and to the hours of 6:00 am and 9:00 am for City operations. The City will publish a schedule of days where watering will be authorized. All Class I use shall be allowed on the same day for all water customers to allow for more efficient enforcement.
- The City will restrict all non-essential use of water by City departments to the same schedule as other utility customers. The following non-essential uses of water have been determined by the City Manager to fall within the scope of this restriction:
 - a. Street sweeping;
 - b. Sewer cleaning (except in emergency situations);
 - c. Watering at all City facilities and any miscellaneous Class I watering; and
 - d. Use of water during the Central Kansas Free Fair, except for livestock consumption.
- The waste of water shall be prohibited. Per Section 7-1002(c), any water identified as being permitted to escape down a street, roadway, or other surface intended for vehicular driving purposes, and any gutter, ditch, or other surface drain, or the failure to repair a controllable leak of water due to defective plumbing shall be strictly enforced. Authorized City officials shall cite any individual, business, or organization that is determined to waste water under this definition. The Abilene Police Department shall be authorized to issue citations to enforce this section of City Code.
- Suspension of all new connections to the public water supply for undeveloped lots. The City will suspend new connections to the public water supply on any undeveloped lot located within the City of Abilene or its service area. For the purposes of this provision, “undeveloped lots” shall be defined as those lots within the corporate boundaries of the City that do not have buildings or occupiable structures located thereon with an existing water service.

The City Manager recognizes that this provision would prevent a water service from being approved and established in various subdivisions throughout the community that are presently not built-out (i.e., the Highlands, Cedar Ridge, East Ridge, Dawson 4, and Prairie Hills, etc.). In addition, it would also prevent water service from being approved and established for any commercial or industrial uses. In effect, this provision would suspend growth within the community until such time as a Level 2 Water Emergency has ended.

- Surcharge on all water use above 15,000 gallons implemented per Section 7-1006 of the City Code. In addition to the modified rate structure proposed to be implemented in a Level 1 Water Emergency, the City will charge an additional surcharge of \$10 per 100 gallons on all water use above each utility account's winter average. The surcharge is to further incentivize water conservation on all non-essential water uses.

Level 2 Triggers (this level would be “triggered” if any one of the following are met):

- Operating Water Treatment Plant at peak production for twenty-two consecutive hours a day; or
- Average depth of Sand Springs water table below five feet.

LEVEL 3: The following actions will be implemented by the City of Abilene:

- The City will prohibit all Class I uses of water whether for public or private consumption.
- The City will restrict all non-essential use of water by City departments in the same manner as other utility customers. The following non-essential uses of water have been determined by the City Manager to fall within the scope of this restriction:
 - a. Street sweeping;
 - b. Sewer cleaning (except in emergency situations);
 - c. Watering at all City facilities and any miscellaneous Class I watering;
 - d. Abilene Municipal Pool would not be replenished and would be closed when deemed unsafe; and
 - e. Use of water during the Central Kansas Free Fair, except for livestock consumption.
- Suspension of all new connections to the public water supply. The City will suspend all new connections to the public water supply. This provision is slightly different than a similar provision proposed for a Level 2 Water Emergency because it would prevent water service from being approved and established for any potential customer, whether the service would be extended to an undeveloped lot or a lot with an existing building or occupiable structure. At this level, no new connections would be allowed to the City's system.

Level 3 Triggers (this level would be “triggered” if any one of the following are met):

- Water towers have declined in available capacity for twenty-four consecutive hours;
- 13th Street Water Tower level is at or below ninety-eight feet;
- Any Sand Springs well failure between June 1 and September 30; or
- Any period of time the Water Treatment Plant is not able to operate at 3 MGD between June 1 and September 30.

Note: Water towers are at full capacity at 114 feet. At forty-six feet, the water system will lose pressure and will not be able to provide water service until water towers have gained sufficient levels to pressurize the system. Staff estimates that this could take up to two days.