



News Release

Brazos River Authority

QUALITY • CONSERVATION • SERVICE

For Immediate Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Judi Pierce
Public Information Officer
(254) 761-3103

BRAZOS RIVER AUTHORITY RECOMMENDS WATER CONSERVATION EFFORTS FOR LAKE SOMERVILLE

Waco, TX – July 28, 2011 -- As the drought throughout Texas continues with little relief in sight, the Brazos River Authority (Authority) has issued Stage 2 Drought Warning Conditions for Lake Somerville. The lake is the surface water supply for the City of Brenham, Gulf Coast Water Authority, Dow Chemical and NRG Energy.

The Authority has notified each of the water providers that Stage 2 conservation efforts are in order to slow the effects of the continued drought on the water supply for the area. At the *Drought Warning stage* a voluntary 3 percent reduction in water use is recommended.

The Stage 2 Drought Warning is part of the Brazos River Authority's Drought Contingency Plan (DCP). This plan, which is required by the state, includes strategies for temporary supply and demand management in response to water shortages that may occur during a drought.

The DCP has three conditions, or stages, ranging from 1-3 in level of severity. Each stage is tied to a corresponding reservoir level, called a "trigger" level. Lake Somerville reached its stage 2 trigger on July 24.

When a reservoir drops below its Stage 1 trigger level, the Authority implements Stage 1 *Drought Watch Conditions* where customers and the public are made aware of potential drought problems. During Stage 1, there is no goal for reduction of water use. Lake Somerville reached Stage 1 drought levels in June.

At the Stage 2 trigger levels, *Drought Warning Conditions* are initiated and a 3 percent reduction in water use is recommended to each water provider. Should dry conditions continue to the Stage 3 trigger level, *Drought Emergency Conditions* are issued with a total reduction of 7 percent in water use recommended.

The Brazos River Authority continually monitors weather forecasts, streamflows and lake levels throughout the Brazos River basin. While not all reservoirs have reached trigger levels as laid out in the DCP, the Authority asks that everyone keep in mind the extreme conditions are affecting the majority of the state and conservation is recommended for all areas.

There are many simple ways to conserve water at home. Most homes use a large amount of water in each of four areas, the bathrooms, the kitchen, the laundry room and outdoor use.

Tips for the bathroom:

- Replace showerheads with a more efficient model. This can save up to six gallons of water per minute.
- Place a plastic bag or bottle filled with water in your toilet tank to reduce the amount of water per fill.
- If you have a leak, fix it! Replace worn washers and valves on sinks and pipes. A leaking faucet can waste more than 3,820 gallons of water a year.
- Take showers instead of baths.
- Turn off the water when brushing your teeth or shaving. (Fill the sink with hot water instead of running it continuously.)

Tips for the kitchen:

- Never run the dishwasher without a full load.
- Don't leave the water running while doing dishes; fill the sink with soapy water.
- Install faucet aerators, they cut the water use in half from the sink.
- It also saves water to steam your vegetables instead of boiling them in a full pot of water.

Tips for the laundry room:

- Wash only full loads and check to see if you have a high efficiency washer. Some of these washers use up to 40% less water and energy than a conventional washer.
- If possible, use a short wash cycle.

Tips for outdoor use:

- Do not over-water your lawn. Set sprinklers for times when it is the coolest to avoid evaporation.
- Cover pools and spas to help against evaporation in the summer.
- Choose your plants wisely! You live in Texas; don't expect your palm tree to do well in the 105-degree heat with no rain. Buy plants that are native and can take the heat waves.
- Don't cut your lawn too short. Longer grass absorbs water better than short grass.
- Use lots of mulch in your flowerbeds and around trees to help hold in moisture.
- If you wash your car at home, use a bucket of soapy water and a nozzle on the hose that you can turn on and off.

A copy of the Brazos River Authority's Drought Contingency Plan can be found at the following web address <http://www.brazos.org/DroughtContingency.asp> or by contacting the Authority at (254) 761-3100.

About the Brazos River Authority

The Brazos River Authority, with headquarters in Waco, is the oldest river authority in Texas. Created by the Texas Legislature in 1929, the Authority's 42,000 square-mile territory includes all or part of 70 counties; extending from the Texas-New Mexico border west of Lubbock to the Gulf of Mexico near Freeport.

The Authority built, owns, and operates three reservoirs (Lakes Possum Kingdom, Granbury, and Limestone). In addition to these water supply reservoirs, the Authority contracts with the Corps of Engineers for the water supply storage space at eight federal multi-purpose flood control and water conservation reservoirs (Lakes Whitney, Belton, Proctor, Somerville, Stillhouse Hollow, Granger, Georgetown and Aquilla).

The Brazos River Authority owns and operates a regional wastewater system for the cities of Temple-Belton. The Authority also operates wastewater treatment plants for the cities of Georgetown, Dime Box, Clute-Richwood and Sugar Land. Through an alliance with the Lower Colorado River Authority, the Brazos River Authority operates wastewater treatment plants at Brushy Creek Regional Wastewater System in Round Rock, the city of Hutto and the city of Liberty Hill.

The Authority owns and operates water treatment systems at Lake Granbury (which supplies potable water to wholesale customers in Hood and Johnson Counties), and the City of Taylor. The Authority also operates a potable water treatment plant for the City of Dime Box. A water treatment plant for the City of Leander is operated by the Brazos River Authority through an alliance with the Lower Colorado River Authority.

The Authority also engages in water quality monitoring activities throughout the Brazos River basin. As a member of the Texas Clean River Program, the Authority samples and tests water from 157 locations throughout the basin on either a monthly or quarterly basis.

For further information on the Brazos River Authority, please contact Judi Pierce, Public Information Officer at 254-761-3103.