

**SECTION H  
DROUGHT CONTINGENCY  
AND  
EMERGENCY WATER DEMAND MANAGEMENT PLAN**

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The goal of this plan is to cause a reduction in water use in response to emergency conditions so that the water availability can be preserved. Since emergency conditions can occur rapidly, responses must also be enacted quickly. This plan has been prepared in advance considering conditions that will initiate and terminate the rationing program.

A Drought/Emergency Management Committee consisting of the Conservation Committee and the General Manager will monitor usage patterns, public education efforts and make recommendations to the Board on future conservation efforts, demand management procedures or any changes to this plan. The Committee will develop public awareness notices, bill stuffers, and other methods that will begin and continue as a constant type of reminder that water should be conserved at all times, not just during a drought or an emergency. This committee will review and evaluate any needed amendments or major changes due to changes in the GCWSC service area population, distribution system, or supply. This review and evaluation will be done at least every five years unless conditions necessitate amendments that are more frequent. (30 TAC 288.20 (c)).

The plan will be implemented according to the five drought response stages as determined by the Board. Section 4 describes the conditions, which will trigger these stages.

**2. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Opportunity for the public to provide input into the preparation of the Plan was provided by Gonzales County Water Supply Corporation scheduling and providing public notice of a public meeting to accept input on the Plan. Notice of the meeting was provided to all customers by posting notice on the Gonzales County Water Supply Corporation website. In the adoption of this plan, the Board considered all comments from customers.

**3. COORDINATION WITH REGIONAL WATER PLANNING GROUP**

Being located within the South Central Texas Region, a copy of this Plan has been provided to the Region L Water Planning Group.

**4. TRIGGERING CONDITIONS**

The Drought/Emergency Management Committee is responsible for monitoring water supply on a weekly basis (or more frequently if conditions warrant) and shall determine when conditions warrant initiation or termination of each stage of the Plan, that is, when the specified triggers are reached. The Committee will monitor monthly operating reports, water supply or storage tank levels and/or rainfall as needed to determine when trigger conditions are reached.

The triggering conditions described below take into consideration:

- the vulnerability of the water source under drought of record conditions;
- the production, treatment, and distribution capacities of the system;
- customer usage based upon historical patterns.

### **Stage I - Customer Awareness/Voluntary Conservation**

- Stage I will be implemented annually May 1<sup>st</sup> through September 30<sup>th</sup>, or
- There is an extended period of low rainfall.

### **Stage II - Mild Condition**

- Stage II may be implemented when two or more of the following conditions exists in either the Western Zone or the Eastern Zone:
  1. Water consumption has reached 80 percent of daily maximum supply for three (3) consecutive days at any two or more of the following GCWSC production sites in the Eastern Zone.
    - A. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC 304 well falls to 170 feet, or
    - B. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC 794 well falls to 220 feet, or
    - C. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Saturn well falls to 170 feet.
  2. Water consumption has reached 80 percent of daily maximum supply for three (3) consecutive days at any two or more of the following GCWSC production sites in the Western Zone.
    - A. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Bebe well falls to 212 feet, or
    - B. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Oak Forest well falls to 170 feet, or
    - C. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Wrightsboro well falls to 170 feet, or

### **Stage III - Moderate Conditions**

- Stage III may be implemented when one or more of the following conditions exist or when the water level in any of the water storage tanks cannot be replenished for two (2) consecutive days:
  1. Water consumption has reached 90 percent of the daily maximum supply for three (3) consecutive days at any two or more of the following GCWSC production sites in the Eastern Zone.
    - A. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC 304 well falls to 180 feet, or
    - B. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC 794 well falls to 230 feet, or
    - C. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Saturn well falls to 180 feet.
  2. Water consumption has reached 90 percent of the daily maximum supply for three (3) consecutive days at any two or more of the following GCWSC production sites in the Western Zone.
    - A. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Bebe well falls to 222 feet, or
    - B. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Oak Forest well falls to 180 feet, or
    - C. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Wrightsboro well falls to 180 feet, or

### **Stage IV - Severe Conditions**

- Stage IV may be implemented when any of the following conditions exist:
  1. Water consumption has reached 95 percent of the amount available for three (3) consecutive days, or

2. The water level in any of the water storage tanks cannot be replenished for three (3) consecutive days, or
3. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC 304 well falls to 190 feet, or
4. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC 794 well falls to 240 feet, or
5. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Bebe well falls to 232 feet, or
6. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Oak Forest well falls to 190 feet, or
7. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Wrightsboro well falls to 190 feet, or
8. When the pumping water level in the GCWSC Saturn well falls to 190 feet.

#### **Stage V - Emergency**

1. Failure of a major component of the system or an event, that reduces the minimum residual pressure in the system below 20 psi for a period of 24 hours or longer, or
2. Water consumption of 100 percent of the maximum available and the water storage levels in the system drop during one 24-hour period, or
3. Natural or man-made contamination of the water supply source(s), or
4. The declaration of a state of emergency due to drought or other natural disaster conditions in a county or counties served by the Corporation, or
5. Reduction of wholesale water supply due to drought conditions, or
6. Other unforeseen events, which could cause imminent health or safety risks to the public.

### **5. STAGES OF GCWSC PRACTICES**

The following practices and use restrictions are to be implemented by the triggers in Section 4. The Board shall institute monitoring and enforce penalties for violations of the use restrictions for each of the Stages listed. The water allocation measures are summarized below.

#### **Stage I - Customer Awareness/Voluntary Conservation**

*GCWSC Management Practices:* Initiate public education measures to increase customer awareness of the benefits of water conservation and efficient water use by notifying customers of voluntary conservation measures and providing conservation information.

*Voluntary Water Use Practices:* Customers are requested to voluntarily limit the use of water for nonessential purposes and to practice water conservation.

Non-essential water uses include:

1. use of water to wash down any sidewalks, walkways, driveways, parking lots, tennis courts, or other hard-surfaced areas;
2. use of water to wash down buildings or structures for purposes other than immediate fire protection;
3. flushing gutters or permitting water to run or accumulate in any gutter or street;
4. use of water for dust control; and
5. failure to repair a controllable leak(s) within a reasonable period after having been given notice directing the repair of such leak(s).

#### **Stage II - Mild Condition**

*Target:* Achieve a 10% reduction in daily water demand.

*GCWSC Management Practices:* The system will reduce flushing operations. System will notify customers of water use restrictions in effect.

*Customer Water Use Restrictions for Demand Reduction*

1. Irrigation of gardens and landscape areas will be restricted to 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 a.m.
2. Customers are not allowed to use water for the pre-defined non-essential purposes noted in Stage I.

**Stage III - Moderate Conditions**

*Target:* Achieve a 15% in daily water demand.

*GCWSC Management Practices:* The system will eliminate flushing operations. System will notify customers of water use restrictions in effect.

*Customer Water Use Restrictions for Demand Reduction*

Outside water use is limited to the hours of 8:00 p.m. to 9:00 a.m. by use of hand-held hoses, hand-held buckets, or drip irrigation.

**Stage IV - Severe Conditions**

*Target:* Achieve 20% reduction in daily water demand.

*GCWSC Management Practices:* System will notify customers of water use restriction in effect.

*Customer Water Use Restrictions for Demand Reduction*

All outside watering prohibited with the exception of water used in poultry and cattle operations.

**Stage V - Emergency**

*Target:* Achieve a 25% reduction in daily water demand.

*GCWSC Management Practices:* System will notify customers of water use restrictions in effect.

*Customer Water Use Restrictions for Demand Reduction*

Water use will be restricted as follows:

- Residential Use Only - 6,000 gallons per month or 200 gallons per day, or
- Commercial, Industrial, and Agricultural Use - based on 75% of the customer's annual average usage.
- Confined Animal Feeding Operations shall be exempt, however, shall be urged to conserve all water possible.

## 6. INITIATION AND TERMINATION PROCEDURES

Once a trigger condition occurs, the Corporation, or its designated responsible representative, shall, based on recommendation from the Chairperson of the Drought/Emergency Management Committee, decide if the appropriate stage of management practices and customer water use restrictions shall be initiated. The Chairperson of the Drought/Emergency Management Committee, shall decide, with the advice and consent of the committee members if the drought or emergency condition warrants a system-wide initiation of the policy or if a specific area of the GCWSC system requires a water demand reduction. The initiation may be delayed if there is a reasonable possibility the water system performance will not be compromised by the condition.

Written notice of the proposed stage of water demand reduction measure and customer water use restrictions shall be mailed or delivered via first class mail to each affected customer upon the initiation of each stage, as well as being posted on the GCWSC website at [www.gcwsc.org](http://www.gcwsc.org). Commercial, Industrial and Agricultural customers will also be contacted by phone and informed of the demand reduction. In addition, upon adoption of Stage IV or V, a notice will be placed in a local newspaper or announced on a local radio station. The customer notice shall contain the following information:

1. The date water demand reduction measure shall begin,
2. The expected duration,
3. The stage (level) of water demand reduction measure to be initiated,
4. Penalty for violations of the water demand reduction measure program, and
5. Affected area or areas.

A sample Customer Notice of water demand reduction measure and customer water use restrictions is included in Miscellaneous Transaction Forms of this tariff.

If the water demand reduction measures extends beyond 30 days then the Chairperson of the Drought/Emergency Management Committee or manager shall present the reasons for the measures at the next scheduled Board Meeting and shall request the concurrence of the Board to extend the period of reduced demand measures.

When the trigger condition no longer exists then the responsible official may terminate the water demand reduction measures if such an action is based on sound judgment. Written notice of the end of demand reduction measures shall be given to customers. A water demand reduction measures period may not exceed 60 days without action by the Board.

## 7. PENALTIES FOR VIOLATIONS

- A. *First Violation* - A written notice shall be delivered via certified mail or by personal hand delivery to each customer/member of their specific violation and their need to comply with the tariff rules. The notice will show the amount of the penalty to be assessed for continued violations.
- B. *Second Violation* - The Corporation will assess a penalty of \$ 200.
- C. *Subsequent Violations* - The Corporation will assess an additional penalty of \$500 for violations continuing after the Second Violation. The Corporation may also install a flow-restricting device in the customer's meter service to limit the amount of water that will pass through the meter in a 24-hour period. The costs of this procedure will be for the actual

work and equipment and shall be paid by the customer.

- D. *Termination* - The Corporation will terminate service for up to 7 days for continuing violations after penalties are assessed under subsection (c). Service will remain off until any delinquent penalty or other assessment is fully paid including a charge for the service call to restore service.

These provisions apply to all customers of the Corporation.

## 8. EXEMPTIONS OR WAIVERS

The Drought/Emergency Management Committee may, in writing, grant a temporary variance for existing water uses otherwise prohibited under this Plan if it is determined that failure to grant such variance would cause an emergency condition adversely affecting the health or sanitation of the public or the person requesting such variance and if one or more of the following conditions are met:

- A. Compliance with this Plan cannot be technically accomplished during the duration of the water supply shortage or other condition for which the Plan is in effect.
- B. Alternative methods can be implemented which will achieve the same level of reduction in water use.
- C. A confined animal feeding operation.

Persons requesting an exemption from the provisions of this Plan shall file a petition for variance with the Drought/Emergency Management Committee within 5 days after the Plan, a particular drought response stage has been invoked, or after a condition, justifying the variance first occurs. All petitions for variances shall be reviewed by the Committee and shall include the following:

1. Name and address of the petitioner(s).
2. Purpose of water use.
3. Specific provision(s) of the Plan from which the petitioner is requesting relief.
4. Detailed statement as to how the specific provision of the Plan adversely affects the petitioner or what damage or harm will occur to the petitioner or others if petitioner complies with this Plan.
5. Description of the relief requested.
6. Period of time for which the variance is sought.
7. Alternative water use restrictions or other measures the petitioner is taking or proposes to take to meet the intent of the Plan and the compliance date.
8. Other pertinent information, as requested by the Committee.

Variances granted by the Committee shall be subject to the following conditions, unless specifically waived or modified by the Committee or Board of Directors:

1. Variances granted shall include a timetable for compliance.
2. Variances granted shall expire when the applicable Stage is no longer in effect, unless the petitioner has failed to meet specified requirements. No variance allowed for a condition requiring water demand reduction measures will continue beyond the termination of the applicable Stage under Section H. Any variance for a subsequent water reduction measure must be petitioned again. The fact that a variance has been granted in response to a petition will have no relevance to the Committee's decision on any subsequent petition.

No variance shall be retroactive or otherwise justify any violation of this Plan occurring prior to the issuance of the variance.

## 9. IMPLEMENTATION

The Board establishes a Conservation Committee that will also serve as the Drought/Emergency Management Committee, the chairperson of which will be the responsible representative to make Drought and Emergency Water Management actions. This Committee will review the procedures in this Plan at least every five years unless conditions necessitate amendments that are more frequent. Modifications may be required to accommodate system growth, changes in water use demand, available water supply and/or other circumstances.

The Board at a properly noticed meeting held on \_\_\_\_\_ adopted this Plan.

SAMPLE

CUSTOMER NOTICE OF VIOLATION

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

From: \_\_\_\_\_, General Manager, GCWSC

To: \_\_\_\_\_, you are hereby notified that on \_\_\_\_\_ it was determined that you violated the restrictions on your water use that are required under the Corporation's Drought Contingency and Emergency Water Demand Management Plan. Specifically, \_\_\_\_\_ (describe violation). You were notified of the restriction on your water use, and the penalties for violating this restriction, on \_\_\_\_\_ (see attached, (attach copy of customer notice of water use restrictions)).

You are directed immediately to restrict your water use under the allocation stated in the previous notice.

You will be assessed a penalty in the amount specified in the Corporation's Tariff for any subsequent violations. If you fail to pay any penalties, your water service may be terminated. In addition, your water service may be temporarily terminated for continued violations.

A complete copy of our approved Drought Contingency and Emergency Water Demand Management Plan remains available for your review at our business office or on the GCWSC website at [www.gcwsc.org](http://www.gcwsc.org). A copy of the Plan may be obtained on payment of standard copying charges.

We appreciate your cooperation.