

Drought Watch Declared in Franklin County – November 3, 2016

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) has placed Franklin County into a “Drought Watch” stage. There are now 30 counties across the state that are in this same category of drought declaration as well as 4 counties in the category of “Drought Warning.”

Please visit www.dep.pa.gov/drought to read DEP’s press release.

What does it mean?

The “Drought Watch” stage is the least severe drought declaration that DEP will issue. It means that at least one of four indicators suggest water supplies may be in jeopardy in the future if no improvements are seen in precipitation. The four indicators are: precipitation, surface water levels, groundwater levels, and soil moisture. For our area, dry conditions persist resulting in precipitation deficits as well as low stream flows and groundwater levels.

What about water restrictions?

At this stage of a Drought (in the “Watch” category), water use restrictions are voluntary, and the target is a 5% reduction in non-essential water uses. Customers will not be penalized if they fail to follow the request for water conservation measures.

DEP and the Borough of Chambersburg encourage all citizens to consider the following steps to reduce their water use:

- Run water only when necessary. Avoid running the faucet while brushing your teeth or shaving, or letting the shower run for several minutes before use.
- Check for household leaks. A leaking toilet can waste up to 200 gallons of water each day.
- Run dishwashers and washing machines only with full loads.
- Replace older appliances with high-efficiency, front-loading models that use about 30 percent less water and 40 to 50 percent less energy.
- Install low-flow plumbing fixtures and aerators on faucets.

Please visit www.chambersburgpa.gov/pdf/UseWaterWisely.pdf for further water conservation information and tips.

How are Chambersburg’s water supplies impacted?

At this time, Long Pine Run Reservoir is at 68% capacity. While the reservoir shows the impact of the Drought, and the level is not typical, capacity is still within a normal operating level for this time of year. We continue to monitor our water supply carefully to ensure that we are aware of any changes and to ensure that we have adequate supply for our customers!

