



Spencer J. Cox

Governor

EXECUTIVE ORDER

2021-10

Requiring Increased Water Conservation Due to Drought Conditions

WHEREAS, 100% of the state is in drought and experiencing record high temperatures in June;

WHEREAS, the forecast predicts exceptionally poor to (potentially) worst-on-record water supply conditions this summer;

WHEREAS, a dry April was followed by an even drier May, with an average of 0.3 inches of precipitation accumulated in valley locations;

WHEREAS, a below-average statewide snowpack reached approximately 81% of normal and peaked 10 days early;

WHEREAS, soil moisture reached exceptionally low levels not previously seen since soil moisture monitoring began in 2006;

WHEREAS, these conditions have caused the streamflows around the state to remain below average;

WHEREAS, many of the reservoirs around the state that provide drinking and irrigation water are less than half of the capacity;

WHEREAS, these conditions were preceded by a record dry and near-record hot year in 2020;

WHEREAS, the United States Department of Agriculture currently has listed 28 primary and one contiguous county in Utah under the Secretarial Disaster Designation for drought;

WHEREAS, these extreme drought conditions are adversely and significantly impacting agribusiness and livestock production, as well as wildlife and natural habitats;

WHEREAS, increased recreation in dry vegetative conditions has contributed to an increased and prolonged threat of wildfire across the state;

WHEREAS, extreme drought conditions threaten access to safe, reliable drinking water from wells, streams, and reservoirs, and exacerbate water quality issues that affect recreational waters including an increase in harmful algal blooms;

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Spencer J. Cox, Governor of the State of Utah, hereby order the following for municipal and industrial water use:

1. As used in this Order:
 - a. "State facility" means a building or structure that is owned or controlled by the state or a state governmental entity.
 - b. "State facility" does not mean a building or structure that is owned or controlled exclusively by:
 - i. the legislative branch of the state;
 - ii. the judicial branch of the state;
 - iii. the Attorney General's Office;
 - iv. the State Auditor's Office;
 - v. the State Treasurer's Office;
 - vi. the State Board of Education; or
 - vii. an independent entity as defined in Utah Code § 63E-1-102.
 - c. "State governmental entity" means any department, board, commission, institution, agency, or institution of higher education.
2. When feasible, a state governmental entity should not water landscapes at a state facility between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.
3. A state governmental entity shall do the following at all state facilities:
 - a. Irrigate lawn areas only 2 times a week in Northern Utah and 3 times a week in Southern Utah
 - b. Prioritize irrigation as follows:
 1. Trees
 2. Shrubs
 3. Perennials
 4. Annuals
 5. Grass
 - c. Develop an implementation plan for updating irrigation technology with devices that are WaterSense certified and include rain and wind shutoff functions and soil moisture sensors;
 - d. Manually shut off systems during rain and wind events in areas without rain and wind sensors;
 - e. Audit and repair all landscape irrigation systems so they are operating at maximum efficiency;
 - f. Develop plans to replace inefficient plumbing fixtures with WaterSense certified low-flow fixtures;
 - g. Update facility-management technology to include metering for water-consuming processes related to irrigation, domestic, and mechanical systems;
 - h. Implement leak-detection and repair programs for both indoor and outdoor water use;
 - i. Conduct periodic checks of state facility restrooms, boiler rooms, etc., to ensure appliances are working at maximum efficiency;
 - j. Implement water efficient methods, technologies, and practices.
 - k. Check with the local water provider to follow restrictions in the local area.

I further ask all Utahns to join this call for conservation:

1. Cities and counties should:
 - a. Immediately consider implementing residential and commercial water restrictions for watering lawns during the current year and develop a supporting enforcement strategy;
 - b. Implement the same practices that are recommended for state facilities at city, county, and institutional buildings.
2. Municipal and industrial water suppliers and secondary systems should:
 - a. Implement water restrictions where appropriate.
 - b. Encourage efficient landscape watering.
 - c. Develop drought response plans.

- d. Notify customers in your system area of current water supply status and system plans.
3. Residential water users should follow best conservation practices:
 - a. Water at least one less time per week (average quarter-acre yard uses 3,000 gallons of water for each watering). Not to exceed lawn watering more than 2 times per week or no more than 3 times per week for Southern Utah.
 - b. Don't water when it's windy.
 - c. Don't water between 10 a.m.- 6 p.m. (Or 10 a.m.-8 p.m. in Southern Utah.)
 - d. [Prioritize your watering](#) to water the most valuable plants in your landscape first: Trees, shrubs, perennials, annuals then grass. Grass is resilient and will enter dormancy during times of drought and high temperatures and recover when conditions improve.
 - e. [Mow your lawn higher](#). Set blades to 3-4 inches. Taller grass means deeper roots that can access water that is deeper in the soil. Tall grass also shades roots and soil to reduce evaporation loss.
 - f. Install a smart irrigation controller and receive a money-saving [rebate](#). These devices connect to WiFi and access weather data and adjust the watering schedule to account for rain, temperature, humidity, UV index and even evapotranspiration. It connects to your phones so that you can control how often you water your landscape. UtahWaterSavers.com
 - g. Check with your local water provider to follow restrictions in your local water provider's jurisdiction.

This Order is effective immediately and shall remain in effect until otherwise modified, amended, rescinded, or superseded.

IN WITNESS, WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Utah. Done in Salt Lake City, Utah, on this, the 8th day of June, 2021.



ATTEST:

Handwritten signature of Spencer J. Cox in black ink.

Spencer J. Cox
Governor

Handwritten signature of Deidre M. Henderson in black ink.

Deidre M. Henderson
Lieutenant Governor