

## **DECLARATION OF VOLUNTARY WATER CONSERVATION**

At this time the Town of Banner Elk is not experiencing a water shortage, however the Town is declaring that voluntary conservation conditions exist given the continued drought in our region. The Town would call upon all water customers to employ voluntary water conservation measures, and eliminate the waste of water. Below is a list of recommended measures during this time.

### **CONSERVATION MEASURES.**

**Indoor residential uses. During conservation for voluntary conservation phases indoor residential units shall adopt conservation measures (1) (15) below.**

- (1) Use dishwashers only when they are full. Washing dishes by hand (do not let the tap run!) saves about 25 gallons.
- (2) Adjust water level on clothes washing machine if possible. Use full loads only if not adjustable.
- (3) Turn off faucets while brushing teeth, etc. Saves about five gallons per day.
- (4) Reduce water use per flush by installing toilet tank displacement inserts. A plastic jug may often be used as an alternative. Do not use bricks, they disintegrate when soaked and the resulting grit hinders closing of the flap valve.
- (5) Do not use the toilet as a trash can.
- (6) Use sink and tub stoppers to avoid wasting water.
- (7) Keep bottle of chilled water in the refrigerator for drinking.
- (8) Find and fix leaks in toilets, which can leak silently. The following methods can be used to see if this is occurring. Place a drop of food coloring in the upper tank and do not flush for 30 minutes. If color appears in the bowl, there is leakage.
- (9) Find and fix leaks in faucets and water using appliances. Faucets can usually be fixed cheaply and quickly by replacing washers.
- (10) Adapt plumbing with flow restricting or other water saving devices. These are usually inexpensive and easy to install. See list of devices in Appendix E attached to the water conservation ordinance.
- (11) Learn to read your water meter so you can judge how much water you use and what difference conservation makes.
- (12) Take shorter showers and shallower baths. Saves about 25 gallons.
- (13) Reduce the number of toilet flushes per day. Each flush uses about 5 gallons (2-3 if you have water saving toilets).
- (14) Do not use a garbage disposal.
- (15) Use non phosphate detergent and save laundry water for lawns and plants.

**Outdoor residential use. During voluntary conservation phases conservation measures (1) (34) below shall be adopted.**

- (1) Water before 10:00 a.m. to prevent evaporation which occurs during the hottest part of the day. Morning is better than evening, when the dampness encourages growth of fungus.
- (2) Water only when lawn shows signs of wilt. Grass that springs back when stepped on does not need water.
- (3) Water thoroughly, not frequently, long enough to soak roots. A light sprinkling evaporates quickly and encourages shallow root systems. Water slowly to avoid runoff.

- (4) Do not let the sprinkler run any longer than necessary. In an hour, 600 gallons can be wasted.
- (5) Allow maximum of one inch of water per week on your lawn. To measure, place cake tins outside to collect rain and water from sprinklers.
- (6) Use pistol grip nozzles on hoses to avoid waste when watering flowers and shrubs.
- (7) Aerate lawns by punching holes 6 inches apart. This allow water to reach roots rather than run off surfaces.
- (8) Position sprinklers to water the lawn, not the pavement.
- (9) Avoid watering on windy days when the wind not only blows water off target, but also causes excess evaporation.
- (10) Keep sprinkler heads clean to prevent uneven watering.
- (11) Adjust hose to simulate a gentle rain. Sprinklers that produce a fine mist waste water through evaporation.
- (12) Know how to turn off an automatic sprinkler system in case of rain.
- (13) Use an alarm clock or stove timer to remind you to shut off sprinklers that do not have timers.

#### Vegetable and Flower Gardens

- (14) Water deeply, slowly, and weekly. Most vegetables require moisture to depth of 6 to 8 inches.
- (15) Keep soil loose so water can penetrate easily.
- (16) Use mulch around plants and between rows to hold in moisture.
- (17) Keep weeds out to reduce competition for water.
- (18) Put the water where you want it and to avoid evaporation try using soilsoakers or slow running hoses, not sprinklers.

#### Trees and Shrubs

- (19) Water deeply using a soil soaker.
- (20) Water only when needed. Check the depth of soil dryness by digging with a trowel.
- (21) Mulch to reduce evaporation. A 2" to 3" layer of wood chips, pine needles, grass clippings, or straw keeps the soil cool in the summer.
- (22) Dig troughs around plants to catch and retain water.
- (23) Water trees growing in full sun more often than those in shade.
- (24) Do not use sprinklers. Apply water directly at base.
- (25) Do not fertilize during the summer. Fertilizing increases a plant's need for water.
- (26) Postpone planting until fall or spring when there is generally less need for water.
- (27) Install trickle drip irrigation systems close to the roots of your plants. By dripping water slowly, the system does not spray water into the air. Use soil probes for large trees.
- (28) Water when cloudy, at night, or even when a light rain is falling.
- (29) Do not allow children to play with hose or sprinklers.
- (30) Limit car washing.
- (31) Be ready to catch rainfall that occurs. Place containers under drain spouts.
- (32) Use leftover water if available.
- (33) Consider delaying the seeding or sodding of new lawns.
- (34) Determine the amount of water being used outdoors by comparing water bills for summer and winter.