

# Greenwich's Water Supply: What I Need to Know About the Drought

Updated for November 2007

## **Where does our water come from?**

Greenwich relies on both surface and groundwater sources for drinking water. Approximately 60% of our residents get their water from our public drinking water supply managed by the Aquarion Water Company. The other 40% are served by private wells.

The public drinking water supply is a surface water system that relies on a series of reservoirs to store water. The main reservoir is the Bargh Reservoir located in the Mianus River Watershed. Water is transferred from the Bargh to the Rockwood and Putnam Reservoirs where the main filtration plant is located. A smaller filtration plant is also located directly on the Mianus River.

Most of the private wells in Greenwich tap into groundwater that flows through cracks in the bedrock. This type of supply is known as a bedrock aquifer.

## **Is there enough water for all of us?**

Southwestern Connecticut has always enjoyed adequate rainfall and an abundant water supply. In recent years, however, the demand for water has increased significantly as we build larger homes, create more lawns, add more pavement, and forget to practice water conservation. Our water resources must be managed carefully to ensure that we have a safe and adequate supply of drinking water. This is possible if everyone does their part to use water wisely everyday.

## **Why are we so concerned about supplies now?**

Below average rainfall this past year has caused drought conditions in our area. This all resulted in below average levels in our reservoir and streams and raised concerns about groundwater supplies. We will continue to monitor water levels closely, working with both the water company and USGS.

## **What is a drought?**

A drought is a period of unusually dry weather in a region where rainfall is normally expected. We experience drought conditions when the lack of rainfall impacts the

water supply (hydrology) of an area. Droughts vary in intensity and duration depending on the season and other climatic conditions. .

### What is the Town doing now?

As of October 3, 2007, the Town called is a Drought Advisory calling for everyone to voluntarily reduce water usage by 10%. Additionally, the Town is meeting every two weeks with the water company and neighboring community officials who are also served by the water company. This meeting is to review drought management plans, get an update on supply status, and prepare for a potential Drought Emergency. The Town is also reviewing water use in all departments and implementing procedures to conserve water and prepare for additional restrictions.

### What can I do?

Everyone can practice water conservation measures in their homes, at school, and at work. Here are some simple tips to follow:

- **Do** flush toilets only when necessary
- **Don't** use the toilet as a wastebasket
- **Do** take shorter showers, fill bathtubs only half-way
- **Don't** let the water run while brushing teeth, shaving, or washing your hands
- **Do** keep a bottle or pitcher of drinking water in the refrigerator
- **Do** wash only full loads in the washing machine or dishwasher
- **Do** check for water leaks, especially in the bathroom and have them fixed
- **Do** consider low flow toilets and showerheads
- **Don't** use the hose to wash the driveway, sidewalks or car, use a bucket instead
- **Do** make sure that you have a shut off nozzle on your hose.
- **Do** add compost to your soil and use mulch in your gardens to keep moisture in
- **Do** water your lawn only when it is needed. Over watering causes shallow root development
- **Do** make sure you are watering the lawn and not the sidewalk
- **Do** water in the early morning or early evening to avoid evaporation.

