



## Town of Greenwich

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# Press Release – August 14, 2002

Richard V. Bergstresser  
First Selectman

## Residents Urged to Reduce Water Usage

With rainfall below normal for July and August, First Selectman Richard V. Bergstresser today asked residents to reduce water usage voluntarily. The extended dry spell combined with high temperatures has increased demand on the public water supply in Greenwich from 12 million gallons per day to 24 million gallons per day mostly due to outdoor water use. Aquarion Water Company has asked customers to reduce water consumption by “minimizing lawn and garden watering and eliminating all non-essential outdoor water use.”

“Currently, our reservoir levels are just over 69 percent of capacity, which is slightly below average for this time of year, so our public supply is adequate,” said Mr. Bergstresser. “But,” he added, “high demand can lead to reduced pressure, which may affect water service to residents, and, more important, may have an impact on our fire hydrants. I am asking everyone to reduce water usage to ensure water pressure is maintained during this peak-demand time.”

Residents on private wells also are reminded to conserve water use. “Many residents feel that if they are on private wells, they do not have to conserve,” states Denise Savageau, Conservation Director. “This is not the case. People on wells should be very careful with their usage to ensure adequate supply. USGS is reporting groundwater levels starting to drop again. High water use not only has an impact on wells, but can also have an impact on nearby ponds, needed for fire protection.”

Town officials have been monitoring the water supply and drought conditions since November 2001. Although above average rainfall in June 2002 eased the situation, the region is still in a rainfall deficit for the year. This results in very dry conditions and increased potential for wildfires. The Greenwich Fire Department routinely monitors water sources in the back country that are used for fire protection. According to William “Mike” Puterbaugh, Deputy Fire Chief, water levels are dropping and some marginal supplies may be unusable if the drought continues. He warns, “We are concerned about current conditions. Reduced water sources have an impact on our ability to respond to fires.

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The slightest little spark could get out of control real fast.” Residents are asked to stop using ponds, identified for fire protection, for irrigation.

Residents and businesses must cooperate to protect both public and private water supplies in Town. Officials anticipate that the need to maintain water conservation efforts will continue until the heat and dry weather breaks.

“In March and April, Greenwich residents did an excellent job keeping water usage down,” says Mr. Bergstresser. “I know that we can reduce usage now if we all pay attention to the following tips:”

1. Do add compost to your soil and use mulch in your garden to hold in moisture.
2. Do water gardens only when needed and use drip irrigation.
3. Do water lawns only when needed. One inch of water per week is enough. Use a coffee can to monitor amounts. Remember, cool season grasses go dormant in warm weather. Brown grass is not dead, just dormant. It will green up as soon as temperatures cool.
4. Do make sure that you know how to manually control your irrigation system.
5. Don't water your lawn for a week after an inch of rain.
6. Do make sure you are watering the lawn and not the sidewalk or street.
7. Do water in the early morning or early evening to avoid evaporation.
8. Do use a shut off nozzle on your hose. Never let the hose run.
9. Don't use the hose to wash the driveway, sidewalk or car. Use a bucket instead.
10. Do plan ahead for next year. A garden and yard designed for water conservation will be a benefit to you and your community.

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