



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

Zone 7 Water Communications Specialist

Alexandra Bradley, 925-453-1028, abradley@zone7water.com

Drought Conditions Prompt Zone 7 to Request Customers Voluntarily Conserve Water

*Water agency provides customers with ways to cut back on water usage
in response to record low rainfall and high temperatures*

LIVERMORE, Calif. (March 23, 2021) – Zone 7 is issuing a request to the Tri Valley community to voluntarily reduce water usage in response to dry weather that has impacted water supplies. Low amounts of local and statewide rainfall, low reservoir levels throughout the state and low snowpack conditions have resulted in significant drought conditions.

“Calendar year 2020 was a dry year and calendar year 2021 is looking to be even drier,” said Zone 7 General Manager Valerie Pryor. “We have invested in water storage programs and will look to purchase additional water supplies for calendar year 2021, but these have significant costs. Continued water conservation by our community will help to reduce these costs and will also position the Tri Valley better for calendar year 2022 should these drought conditions continue.”

The Tri Valley has received just 5.44 inches of rainfall this water year which includes the full rainy season beginning in October of 2020 continuing through September of 2021. At this point in time, we are at less than half of our calendar year average with 46% of average received at this time. We have received only 38% of the rainfall in an average water year. The lowest water rainfall on record in one water year is 6.02 inches. As of March 22, water stored in Lake Del Valle was at 78% of capacity with 31,000 acre-feet out of the possible 40,000 acre-feet.

The water conservation message is an ongoing priority for Zone 7 and Tri Valley residents have responded in kind to these needs. The area has collectively cut water use over the last ten years and during the last severe drought period, customers increased efforts to save over 40 percent in 2014.

Based on this past response, Zone 7 is not currently considering mandatory conservation or restrictions.

“We have seen tremendous support from our community in the past, and we know they are willing to put in the effort needed to get us through these difficult times,” said Zone 7 Board of Directors President Olivia Sanwong. “We are counting on Tri Valley residents to once again increase voluntary conservation to preserve water supply and are hopeful mandatory restrictions will not be necessary to get us through these dry years.”

As the drought conditions evolve through the year, the State of California will update water supply information and forecasts. Zone 7 will continue the conversation about the need for reduced water use, or other measures, with the Tri Valley as necessary.

In order to assist the community with water conservation efforts, Zone 7 has launched a comprehensive water wise outreach effort, with a list of different ways residents can voluntarily save water:

Find and repair leaks with this handy check list:

- Check your water meter for activity when all water is off, which could indicate a leak.
- Check sinks for dripping faucets, which waste 3,000 gallons per year at one drip per second.
- Check under sinks for pooling water and signs of rust, which indicate the need for repair.
- Check for toilet leaks by adding food coloring to tanks. Color in the bowl after 10 minutes could indicate the need for a new toilet flapper.
- Check how long it takes the toilet to refill after flushing. If you hear the water running for more than a minute, it may indicate a leak.
- Check walls for signs of moisture including water spots, bubbling wallpaper or bulging paint – which could mean a pipe leak.
- Check your outside faucets or hose bibs for signs of rust, wet or muddy areas underneath to ensure you have no leaks going unnoticed outdoors.
- Check sprinkler systems for leaks, overspray or broken sprinkler heads. Repairing them could save up to 500 gallons per month.

Reduce outdoor usage:

- Replace grass lawns, which require regular watering, with native, drought resistant gardens.
- Add mulch to gardens, around plants and trees, to help plants retain water better.
- Group plants into garden zones by the amount of water they need to avoid excess watering.
- Install water-efficient irrigation systems to minimize water use.
- Don't water when it does rain! Install WaterSense weather-based irrigation controllers.
- Water gardens early in the morning when it is cool to reduce evaporation.
- Use a broom to clean driveways, sidewalks and patios, rather than a hose.
- Keep pools covered when not in use to reduce evaporation.

Reduce indoor usage:

- Run dishwashers and clothes washers only when they are at full capacity.
- Don't let faucets run when brushing teeth.
- Defrost foods in the refrigerator rather than under running water.
- Reduce shower times and get a timer or play music and give yourself a three-song limit.
- Scrape food off of plates, pots and pans using a scraper, rather than running water.
- Let pans soak in soapy water until they are ready to be cleaned, rather than using running water to aid in stuck-on food removal.
- Keep a pitcher of water in the refrigerator to keep it cool and ready to drink, rather than letting the faucet run to wait for water to cool.
- Catch your warm-up water in the shower and use it to water plants so it doesn't go to waste.

For more information, fun, shareable videos, lists of native plants and more resources, visit www.zone7water.com/waterwise.

###

About Zone 7 Water

Zone 7 Water Agency is one of the 10 active zones of the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. The District was established by the State Legislature in October 1949 to solve problems of flooding, drainage, channel erosion and water supply and conservation in Alameda County. In 1957, by popular vote, Zone 7 became a special district governed by a seven-member board of directors. Along with flood protection, Zone 7 supplies water to all of eastern Alameda County and a population of over a quarter million residents. Treated water is sold wholesale to local retailers, including the cities of Livermore and Pleasanton, the Dublin San Ramon Services District, and the California Water Service Company. Zone 7 also distributes untreated water to local agriculture operations and golf courses.