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SJWD Newsletter FALL 2008

(Cover)

WATER LINES Newsletter

(SJWD logo)

Fall 2008

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A Word from Mike Caston, Executive Director

The last two summers have been challenging for us all. The lack of substantial rainfall has led to record low stream flows into our reservoirs. The sporadic rainfall that we are receiving is not enough to adequately replenish the groundwater that supplies these crucial tributaries. As a result, we enacted mandatory restrictions to decrease the demand on our system and you responded. Through mid-August, demand had decreased by up to 39 percent.

Like you, we don't want the restrictions to continue any longer than necessary. We will continually evaluate the situation and make appropriate adjustments as necessary. Looking ahead, SJWD will continue to explore several ways to ensure a sustainable water source for the future of our community. (1) We will be evaluating a new rate structure that encourages water conservation. The new rate structure should not affect the majority of customers. (2) Plans are under way for the expansion of our water treatment plant in Lyman. The expansion will allow us to treat up to 57 percent more gallons per day. (3) We are committed to providing more education and information to all of our customers regarding the wise use of water. Our main concern is in preserving, protecting and developing all of the water resources in our area. Let's all work together to ensure there will be plenty of water in the future.

Thank you,
Mike

New EPA program makes sense.

WaterSense, a partnership program sponsored by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, makes it easy for Americans to save water and protect the environment. Look for the WaterSense label to choose quality, water-efficient products. To learn about WaterSense labeled products, tips on saving

water, and how businesses and organizations can partner with WaterSense, visit www.epa.gov/watersense.

Adopt a fire hydrant!

SJWD is starting a new program, **Adopt a Fire Hydrant**, which involves our customers and local fire departments. Customers who volunteer to participate will simply keep an eye on their nearest hydrant, making sure that it is accessible and appears to be in good working condition. Just call us if you see a problem.

Also, we'll want to know if you see any suspicious activity near a hydrant, such as a tanker truck drawing water. Every year, thousands of gallons of water are illegally taken from hydrants in our area. Only SJWD employees, fire department personnel and authorized independent users should be utilizing our hydrants.

Along with increased monitoring of the hydrants, the adoption program will stimulate better communications between customers, SJWD and local fire departments.

Adopt a Fire Hydrant will be fun and a good subject of neighborhood conversation. You could even get your children involved, making them Fire Hydrant Sheriffs. Call 439-4423 to find out more about the program.

14 Upstate counties now on Extreme drought list.

Despite water conservation efforts by Upstate residents

and local water districts, the state drought committee was forced to add nine more Upstate counties to the Extreme drought category. These include Anderson, Abbeville, McCormick, Edgefield, Saluda, Greenwood, Laurens, Newberry and Laurens. They join five other counties that were declared in extreme drought on June 30: Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg.

With no significant relief in sight in terms of rainfall, the South Carolina Drought Response Committee determined that to help protect existing water supplies:

- Water systems, businesses and individuals in the extreme drought counties should implement aggressive conservation measures;
- Water systems need to immediately contact the S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control (DHEC) and the S.C. Department of Natural Resources (DNR) if they anticipate water supply problems;
- Water systems should notify the DNR Drought Information Center regarding the success of their conservation actions.

“Timely planning by local water systems and conservation measures taken by many upstate citizens are helping to keep most drinking water supplies at adequate levels,” said Steve de Kozlowski, Interim Deputy Director for DNR’s Land, Water Conservation Division.

The state drought committee did not impose any mandatory water-use and withdrawal restrictions, but did encourage water systems, businesses and individuals in

the extreme drought areas to “implement aggressive conservation measures” to reduce water use as much as possible.

For more information, visit the Office of State Climatology drought Web site at:

www.dnr.sc.gov/climate/sco/Drought/drought_current_info.php.

DNR Tips for saving water and money.

As we go through yet another drought in the Upstate, conscientious use of water is more critical than ever. By taking advantage of these tips provided by our state’s Department of Natural Resources, you’ll not only help to preserve this valuable resource, but you’ll save money as well.

CONSERVE WATER IN THE HOUSE:

- Turn off water while brushing teeth and shaving.
- Take shorter showers.
- Install a water-efficient showerhead (2.5 gallons or less per minute).
- Use less water in the bathtub. Filling the tub uses about 50 gallons of water. Try bathing in about 10 gallons. Plug the tub when you shower to see how much water is just going down the drain.
- Wash only full loads of dishes in dishwasher. A dishwasher uses about 14 gallons of water per load.

- When you buy a new toilet, purchase a low flow model (1.6 gallons or less per flush).
- Check your toilet for "silent" leaks by placing a little food coloring in the tank and seeing if it leaks into the bowl.
- Avoid using the toilet as a trash basket for facial tissues and similar items. Each flush uses 5 to 7 gallons of water.
- Reduce the use of garbage disposals, which use as much as 2 gallons of water per minute, by peeling vegetables, eggs and other foods on newspapers. Wrap the food waste and dispose of it with the trash. Or, use food waste in a garden compost pile.
- Keep a gallon of drinking water in the refrigerator rather than running the tap for cold water.
- Run your washing machine with a full load of clothes. Match your washer's load selector to each load size. Wash with warm water instead of hot, rinse with cold water instead of warm. Wash with cold water when you can. (When possible) hang your wash out to dry.
- Buy an energy-saving washing machine. Buy an Energy Star model and save water and electricity.
- Use a front-loading washing machine. The newest innovation in washers is the front-loading washing machine. These save even more water and electricity.

- Teach children to turn water faucets off tightly after use.

CONSERVE WATER OUTSIDE THE HOUSE:

- Use drought-tolerant plants and grasses for landscaping and reduce grass-covered areas.
- Cut your grass at least three inches high to shade the roots, making it more drought-tolerant; keep your mower sharp for the healthiest grass.
- Mulch to retain water. Spread leaves, lawn clippings, or landscaping tarps around plants. Mulching also controls weeds that compete with garden plants for water.
- If you use porous pavement (gravel is a good example) instead of asphalt for driveways and walkways, the rain can recharge groundwater supplies instead of running off and contributing to erosion.
- Use a broom instead of a hose to clean off your driveway or sidewalk.
- Wash your automobile only at a car wash where water is recycled and cleaned.

By following these tips, we can all work together to save water for the future, and save money today!