



Cobb County Water System - Water Efficiency Program News - Winter 2017

Drought and Rainfall

On November 17, 2016, The Georgia Environmental Protection Division issued a Level 2 Drought Response Declaration. This declaration limited outdoor irrigation to **two days a week before 10AM and after 4PM on the odd/even schedule**. Even and unnumbered addresses may water on Wednesday and Saturday, odd addresses may water on Thursday and Sunday. Other water using activities: ornamental fountains, charity carwashes, at-home pressure washing or car washing are prohibited. More information can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/CCWSwaterrules>.

On Tuesday, November 29, 2016, Cobb County finally received the first measurable rainfall in 70 days. Because it had been so long since it rained many people believed the drought was now over, but that is not the case. Drought in the southeast, and metropolitan Atlanta in particular, is different than drought in the southwest. This year was very unusual with the extended period of absolutely no rainfall. Typically a drought in this area means less rainfall than normal, but not the total absence of rainfall. The answer to how long will the drought last is not one anyone can answer at this time. What we do know is the resources we look to for indicators: NOAA, The Climate Prediction Center, United State Geological Survey, and The National Integrated Drought Information System have all indicated that we will have a drier than normal winter following a wet December, and the drought is anticipated to persist in the region. Remember drier than normal does not mean no rain. It means the trend we have experienced since February, below normal rainfall, is likely to continue.

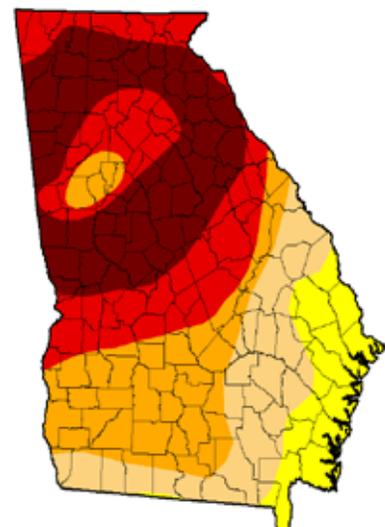
Many may wonder why worry about this now. It is cooler, most people are not irrigating, why worry about drought? Drought is a unique natural disaster. It is slow moving and the impacts are cumulative and worsen over time. Drought damage is best mitigated by taking a long view and assuming the conditions will continue and intensify with warmer weather. That warmer weather also brings increased use. The activities, practices, and restrictions undertaken now are to extend the resource and lessen the impacts of a prolonged drought. At this time we have no way of knowing if this is a 1, 2, or 3 year drought.

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Upcoming Events

For a full schedule of Cobb Water Efficiency Programs or to schedule a civic or school presentation visit <http://tinyurl.com/WaterEffEvents>, email waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org or call 770-419-6244

Allatoona Ally and Friends Coloring Book Launch Party - *Come join us to celebrate the artists selected to be featured in the 11th annual "Allatoona Ally and Friends Coloring Book"* - Tuesday, January 31, 2017, at the Cobb County Water Lab Training Room. Starting at 5PM.



US Drought Map Week of December 5, 2016

Education Update

It's been a busy school year for the Water Efficiency staff and for our mascot, Tappy Turtle. Through our turtle-in-residence program, The Tappy Project, Tappy visited 37 classrooms this semester. Tappy spent a week in each room, introducing young students to the water cycle and the importance of water conservation.

Our Water Efficiency staff have visited 32 schools so far this year and have reached over 5,600 students with our free water conservation programs. We have especially enjoyed the opportunity to discuss the current drought situation in Georgia and were very impressed with the students' suggestions for how we can all save water at home and at school. It's exciting to meet a whole new generation of **#Droughtbusters**.

On October 28th Cobb Water, along with Marietta Water, hosted the 2nd annual Cobb-Marietta Model Water Tower Competition. Our students, teachers, and volunteers all had a great time with the judging and activities, and the students had a chance to interact with water professionals and ask questions about their careers. This year's 3rd place prize went to Team Fairy from Cooper Middle School, 2nd place went to Team D&K from Cooper Middle School, and 1st place went to Team Towers and Toilets from Marietta Middle School. Congratulations to all of our winners and participants!

If you are interested in scheduling a lesson for your students or a visit from Tappy Turtle, please contact Amy Warnock at (770) 419-6374 or amy.warnock@cobbcounty.org



Kemp ES 1st graders spend time with Tappy Turtle in their classroom.



A Pokemon-themed water tower is measured at the Dimensions station during the Model Water Tower Competition



Team Towers & Toilets display their winners' check at the Cobb-Marietta Model Water Tower Competition

Green School Update

Green School applications and activity logs are already beginning to roll in. You can find the forms, and any other information you might need about the program, on our Green School page at www.cobbwater.org/greenschool.htm

If you're looking for a way to step up your Green School game, consider applying for our Green Innovation Award. It's a great way to share your school's creative programs and be recognized for them. Find more information on the Green School page under Awards.

Are You a Drought Buster?

When things get dry, and water restrictions get activated and you want to conserve, who you gonna call? Drought Busters! Follow Tappy Turtle and his fellow Drought Busters at as he helps water rules, of Cobb's programs, Share what to be a on Tappy's Twitter



Cobb Water you navigate take advantage conservation and save water. you are doing drought buster Facebook or account using

#DroughtBusters. Also enjoy following the adventures of our Drought Busters through their video series and win fun prizes by participating in our Drought Buster contests throughout the year. Do your part and help us bust this drought!



Cobb County Water System's Drought Busters... We Ain't Afraid to Conserve! #DroughtBusters

Tips from Tappy

The efficient use of our precious water resources is always important, but as the region is currently experiencing a severe drought saving water is even more important. Just because water conservation is important does not mean it is hard to do. Try these easy actions and you can be a Drought Buster too.

- As the weather gets colder make sure you have winterized your irrigation system. Drain all the water from the system by opening the valves. Then make sure that the system is completely turned off. PVC pipe is especially vulnerable to breakage in freezing weather.
- Insulate the visible water pipes under sinks, in crawl spaces, and basements. This helps you receive hot water faster and provides additional protection against freezing pipe.
- When temps dip below freezing, open cabinets to expose pipes to warmth and run a small stream mix of hot and cold water to prevent pipes from freezing. A small stream of water will use less water than a broken water pipe.
- Check your water bill for any changes in water consumption. The drought causes our clay soils to compact and tighten and this can cause a an increased liklihood of waterline leaks.
- Cobb water has free water efficiency kits and WaterSense labeled shower heads to help you save water at home. They are available at the front counter of the Water System customer service facility or by emailing waterefficiency@cobbcounty.org.

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Also it is important to understand that not all rainfall is beneficial and usable rainfall. Very intense rainfall where a large volume of rain falls in short bursts is not very effective in recharging base flows or reducing soil moisture deficits. Prolonged, slow, steady rain over an extended period of time is the most effective at combating drought conditions. Very rapid rainfall cannot be absorbed, particularly by our dry clay soils, and often results in rapid runoff. This causes a temporary peak in the streamflow known as stream flashing, followed by a rapid return to previous low levels.

Rainfall's effect on drought can be viewed similarly to medication's impact on illness. One dose of medication may temporarily relieve symptoms but it takes a longer time of sustained treatment to achieve a full recovery. Rainfall can alleviate some of the dramatic impacts of drought, like wildfires, but sustained beneficial rain is needed over time to reach full recovery. Drought management and recovery are complex and involve much more than just the presence or absence of rainfall. For more information on drought The NIDIS US Drought Portal found at www.drought.gov has many excellent resources.

WATER SAVER

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WINTER 2017

Water Source Climate Update

Rainfall this fall has been well below average and coupled with unusually high temperatures. Both Cobb and north Georgia are currently in extreme and exceptional drought status. Allatoona's current level is 831.48 feet. The streamflow in local water bodies that feed the Chattahoochee River are less than 25% of the normal streamflow. Visit <http://droughtmonitor.unl.edu/> to keep up to date on the current drought conditions.

Declared Water Restrictions Status: Level 2 Drought Response

For Irrigation – Outdoor irrigation is permitted twice a week on the odd/even schedule. Even and unnumbered addresses may water on Wednesday and Saturday between 4PM-10AM and Odd addresses may water on Thursday and Sunday between 4PM-10AM. Visit: <http://tinyurl.com/cobbwater-outdoorwateringrules> for more information on outdoor watering rules.

Rain Fall SEPT-NOV

SEPT –1.93-Inches

OCT –0.00- Inches

NOV –2.42- Inches

2016 YTD – 28.42

JAN-NOV AVG – 45.81

Cobb County Water System Water Efficiency Program

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Published December 14, 2016

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Cobb County Water System, an agency of the
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