



**Water & Sewer Department
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PUBLIC NOTICE

Level 2-Significant Drought

Posted: September 11, 2025

On September 09, 2025 the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental affairs (EEA) issued a Level 2-Significant Drought Declaration for the Central Region of Massachusetts. As required by MassDEP & EEA, the Town is following the guidance and response actions in the Massachusetts Drought Plan and instituting a MANDATORY non-essential water use restriction as required by our MassDEP Water Management Act Registration. Also, in addition to the State drought restriction, Bigelow Well our largest single producing source remains offline under construction for PFAS treatment and will remain offline thru the summer of 2026. Without this source, it has been challenging to keep up with daily water system demand.

These mandatory water restrictions are for daily "non-essential" water use from public water sources and shall be in effect until **further notice per the EEA.**

Non-essential outdoor water uses that are subject to mandatory restrictions include:

- irrigation of lawns via sprinklers or automatic irrigation systems;
- filling swimming pools;
- washing of vehicles, except in a commercial car wash or as necessary for operator safety; and
- washing exterior building surfaces, parking lots, driveways or sidewalks, except as necessary to apply surface treatments such as paint, preservatives, stucco, pavement or cement.

When you CAN use water outdoors:

The following "essential uses" as defined by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) may be allowed, before 9:00am and after 5:00pm, when mandatory restrictions are in place:

- a. for health or safety reasons
- b. irrigation to establish a new lawn and new plantings during the months of May and September;
- c. irrigation of public parks and recreation fields by means of automatic sprinklers;
- d. by regulation;
- e. for the production of food and fiber
- f. irrigation of gardens, flowers and ornamental plants by means of a hand-held hose or drip irrigation system; and irrigation of lawns by means of a hand-held hose;
- g. for the maintenance of livestock; or
- h. to meet the core functions of a business.

Nonessential uses are those other than essential uses.

Enforcement will include:

- Written warning of first offense;
- \$50 fine for second offense;
- \$100 fine for each subsequent offense;
- **Each day of violation constitutes a separate offense.**