



April 27, 2026

**RE: Level 1 Drought Response Declaration**

Dear EPD Permit Holder:

The Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has been monitoring climatic indicators and water supply conditions to assess drought and severity, as directed by the Drought Management Rule adopted in June 2015. The entire state is under various classifications of drought conditions, including D4 (Exceptional Drought) and D3 (Extreme Drought) conditions affecting the majority of the state's territory (US Drought Monitor Map for Georgia).

As EPD Director, because of these drought conditions, I am declaring a State-wide Level 1 Drought Response for public water systems that use surface water and/or groundwater.

A Level 1 Drought Response requires that public water systems implement a public information campaign that shall include, at a minimum, public notice regarding drought conditions and drought-specific public service messages in one or more of the following ways: newspaper advertisements, bill inserts, website homepage, social media, and notices in public libraries.

A Level 1 Drought Response public information campaign should target all commercial and residential water use, not just outdoor watering; and emphasize what customers should to be good stewards of our water resources. It should not focus on what they cannot do. Examples of things to emphasize include:

- Regularly check for, and repair, leaks inside and outside your home.
- Don't leave the tap running. When shaving, brushing your teeth, washing your face, or food, turn off the tap.
- Only water your landscape when necessary and adjust sprinklers so only your lawn is watered and not the house, sidewalk or street.

As a reminder, under a Drought Response Level 1, general landscape watering may be done between 4pm and 10 am each day, and the following activities may be done at any time of day:

- Irrigation of personal food gardens may be done at any time of day;
- Irrigation of new and replanted plant, seed, or turf may be done at any time of day for 30 days after installation;
- Drip irrigation or irrigation using soaker hoses may be done at any time of day; and
- Handwatering with a hose with automatic cutoff or handheld container may be done at any time of day.

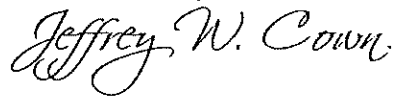
More water conservation information is available at <https://epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch/water-conservation>.

Within five days of receipt of this notice of a drought response level declaration, you shall implement this drought response strategy.

For more information, the Rules for Drought Management are available at <http://rules.sos.ga.gov/gac/391-3-30>. Also, a public report on current climatic and hydrologic indicators, prepared pursuant to the rule, is available at <https://epd.georgia.gov/watershed-protection-branch/drought-management>.

If you have any further questions, please contact Johmar Haye at [johmar.haye1@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:johmar.haye1@dnr.ga.gov), Wei Zeng at [wei.zeng@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:wei.zeng@dnr.ga.gov), or Jennifer Welte at [jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov](mailto:jennifer.welte@dnr.ga.gov). Your cooperation in this matter is appreciated.

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Jeffrey W. Cown in cursive script.

Jeffrey W. Cown  
Director  
Environmental Protection Division

## On April 27<sup>th</sup> Georgia EPD Declares Level 1 Drought Response State-wide

Persistent dry conditions have prompted Georgia EPD to declare a Level 1 Drought Response State-wide. A Level 1 Drought Response declaration means that all water utilities will begin a public information campaign to help citizens better understand drought, its impact on water supplies and the need for water conservation. According to the federal government's U.S. Drought Monitor, all counties are affected in Georgia by the Level 1 Drought Response declaration and are experiencing severe and extreme drought conditions. As your water supplier has taken action to insure that the water supply to the Town of Trion is good and practicing effective water conservation will help make sure we have a sufficient supply through the coming months if dry conditions persist during these months of the year for our area. Additional websites that are very informative for water conservation tips include the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District's My Drop Counts campaign at <http://mydropcounts.org>, Georgia Water Smart <http://www.georgiawatersmart.com>, and Georgia Green Industry Association <http://www.ggia.org>. If you have any questions about your water or how to conserve water, please contact Cynthia Keasler at (706) 734-4724 or Ron Beegle at (706) 734-4714.