
WUC

Water Utility Council of the
PA-Section, American Water
Works Association (PA-AWWA)



GOVERNMENT RELATIONS UPDATE

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September 12, 2016 -- Issue 1003

*PA- Section, American Water Works Association
National Association of Water Companies
Water Works Operators' Association of Pennsylvania*

Drought Watch Declared for Four Additional Pennsylvania Counties

On September 6, 2016, the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) issued a drought watch declaration for four more Pennsylvania counties - Chester, Cumberland, Delaware and Philadelphia - due to low stream flows, declining groundwater levels and lack of precipitation. The declaration, which brings the number of counties under drought watch to 38 -- was made following today's meeting of members of the Commonwealth's Drought Task Force.

Currently, 38 counties are under a drought watch declaration that calls for a voluntary 5 percent reduction in non-essential water use. One county, Potter, remains in a drought warning. Citizens in that county are encouraged to voluntarily reduce their water use between 10 to 15 percent.

"Below-normal precipitation across most of the state has resulted in instantaneous stream flows declining in the central and eastern part of the state," DEP Acting Secretary Patrick McDonnell said. "We're asking residents to continue to conserve water in order to preserve adequate drinking water supplies."

Eight public water systems have instituted voluntary and mandatory water restrictions. They include:

- Albion Borough Water System, Erie County
- Bedford Borough Water Authority, Bedford County
- Dubois Water Department, Clearfield County
- Galeton Borough Water Authority, Potter County
- Huntingdon Borough Water Department, Huntingdon County
- Petersburg Borough Water System, Huntingdon County
- Shinglehouse Borough Water Department, Potter County
- Wellsboro Municipal Authority, Tioga County

On Aug. 11, DEP notified all water suppliers in the affected counties of the need to monitor their supplies and update their drought contingency plans as necessary.

In addition to precipitation, groundwater levels and stream flows, state officials also monitor soil moisture and water supply storage.

DEP recommends the following ways to reduce water use:

- Run water only when necessary. Avoid running the faucet while brushing your teeth or shaving, or letting the shower run for several minutes before use;
- Check for household leaks. A leaking toilet can waste up to 200 gallons of water each day!
- Run dishwashers and washing machines only with full loads.
- Replace older appliances with high-efficiency, front-loading models that use about 30 percent less water and 40 to 50 percent less energy.
- Install low-flow plumbing fixtures and aerators on faucets.

DEP also offers other water conservation recommendations and water audit procedures for commercial and industrial users, such as food processors, hotels and educational institutions. These recommendations and additional drought monitoring information are available by clicking [here](#) or visiting DEP's [website](#).

Following is the list of counties under a drought declaration:

Drought Warning

Potter

Drought Watch

Armstrong
 Bedford
 Berks
 Blair
 Bradford
 Cameron
 Carbon
 Centre
 Chester
 Clarion
 Clearfield
 Clinton
 Cumberland
 Dauphin
 Delaware
 Elk

Forest
 Fulton
 Huntingdon
 Indiana
 Jefferson
 Juniata
 Lawrence
 Lebanon
 Lehigh
 Lycoming
 McKean
 Mercer
 Mifflin
 Northampton
 Perry
 Philadelphia
 Schuylkill
 Snyder
 Sullivan
 Tioga
 Union
 Venango

Source: DEP Press Release, 9/6/2016

National Preparedness Month Facilitated Discussion Set for September 15

September is National Preparedness Month and communities across the nation are taking action to prepare for the next emergency. The EPA is participating in these efforts by sending weekly updates on steps that can be taken at the local level to enhance resilience to water emergencies. Sign up for the What's Going On? Newsletter from the Water Security Division to receive weekly alerts.

In celebration of National Preparedness Month, EPA will be hosting a facilitated discussion on September 15, 2016 at 3:00 PM EST. The discussion will feature a scenario based on a water loss emergency for water and wastewater utilities, public health agencies, hospitals, restaurants, businesses and others in the community who rely on water services and would benefit from learning key preparedness actions. The disaster will disrupt the water services in a fictional community.

Register [here](#).

Source: EPA Water Headlines, 9/8/2016

Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Center Board Meeting Cancellation

The September 12 meeting of the Small Water Systems Technical Assistance Center Board has been **cancelled**.

The next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on Tuesday, October 11 at 9 a.m. in the Rachel Carson State Office Building, Harrisburg. Questions on either meeting should be directed to Dawn Hissner, Bureau of Safe Drinking Water, at dhissner@pa.gov or 717-772-2189. The agenda and meeting materials are available through the Public Participation tab on the Department's [website](#).

Source: Pennsylvania Bulletin, [9/10/2016](#)

Greenleaf Continues to Pursue Remediation Funding, Health Study from Navy

On September 7, 2016, State Senator Stewart J. Greenleaf (R, Montgomery, Bucks) issued his second [letter](#) in three months to Acting Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Steven R. Iselin, stating his disappointment and frustration with the Department's failure to fully fund remediation efforts and an epidemiological study of local well water contamination.

In May, Senator Greenleaf held a meeting of federal, state and local officials to discuss short and long term strategies for addressing the contamination issue. Senator Greenleaf then joined Governor Wolf and other state officials in sending a letter to the Navy and Air Force in early June requesting they fund health screenings for affected residents and cover the costs of remediation efforts.

On June 9th, the Pennsylvania Senate passed Senator Greenleaf's SR 384, which called on the President and Congress to use every means at their disposal to remediate contaminated water and fund all measures to protect public health.

Only July 22nd, Senator Greenleaf sent a letter to Mr. Iselin, in which he reiterated his belief that the Navy has an obligation to fully fund all remediation efforts in Horsham, Warminster and Warrington and conduct an epidemiological study in the area.

This most recent letter comes after the announcement that residents of Horsham and Warminster will see a rate increase as the townships will now be forced to draw on a nearby municipal water supply.

"The federal government must understand the injustice of this situation," said Senator Greenleaf. "Everyone at the local and state level has done everything possible to ensure safe drinking water, but the state should not have to pay for it, and innocent residents should not be paying a dime. Furthermore, we have hundreds of people who are highly concerned about their health and people who are sick. The Navy stated in a letter to me in July that they are 'committed to protecting human health' and 'ensuring the public and private water supply remains safe to drink'-it is time for their actions to live up to these words. The Navy doesn't believe that a health study will prove anything and that they only need to pay for filtration on wells above the EPA's Health Advisory Limit. They need to demonstrate their commitment by doing what is prudent, not what is "required". The Navy has a clear responsibility to take action and foot the bill."

Source: Senator Greenleaf Press Release, 9/7/2016

Governor Wolf, DEP Announce Completion of New Main Water Line to Serve Stockton Village Residents; New Line

Replaces Old, Unpermitted Water System

On September 8, 2016, Governor Tom Wolf and the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) announced completion of a new \$2.179 million water line for residents in the Villages of Stockton #6 and #8 in Hazle Township, Luzerne County. The 2-mile line now connects 43 village homes to the main water line of the Hazleton City Authority (HCA) public water system which currently serves the City of Hazleton and surrounding communities.

"DEP's effort to work with the local community to complete this new water line will serve these residents well and I appreciate the work done by all involved to ensure clean water will be available," Governor Wolf said.

"One of the missions of the department is to ensure safe water for citizens of the Commonwealth and this new water line helps accomplish that," said DEP Northeast Regional Director Mike Bedrin. "When the department determined the old system was no longer sustainable, we teamed up with other state and local agencies to make sure residents were able to get a resources that we all deserve."

The line is the culmination of two years' worth of planning and work by the department, the HCA, and others to remove residents from an old and unpermitted public water system that did not meet standards set forth by the Safe Drinking Water Act (SDA) and had no responsible party operating it.

In July of 2014, the department issued a precautionary warning to both villages to not use water from the old system for consumption because it was not being properly treated and there was presence of some microbiological contaminants such as E. coli bacteria, giardia and other organisms that could be harmful to human health. The water system also did not have a state-mandated treatment system as set forth in the SDA.

That order prompted staff from the department's Safe Drinking Water Program to begin working with the HCA, Hazleton City, Hazle Township Supervisors, the Department of Transportation,

State Senator John Yudichak and Representative Tarah Toohil to find other suitable options. In April of 2015, PENNVEST approved grant money from the Infrastructure Grant Program for construction of the line.

Work on the new system began in September of 2015 with Nittany Engineering out of Centre Hall designing, Schumacher Engineering, Inc. of Hazleton inspecting the line and James T. O'Hara Excavating, Inc. of Moscow, PA as the contractor for construction.

The old water lines serving the villages were capped by the HCA in August. The village residents are now served by the HCA.

Source: DEP Press Release, 9/8/2016

Public Listening Session on Great Lakes CSOs Notification Requirements Set for September 14

On September 14, 2016, EPA will be holding a public listening session in Chicago, Illinois, to solicit input for the development of a new regulation establishing public notification requirements for combined sewer overflows (CSOs) in the Great Lakes. In addition to giving feedback by participating or submitting written comments at the public listening session, the public can also submit written comments to the agency through e-mail, fax, or mail. Public feedback will help shape a future regulatory proposal intended to better protect residents in the affected areas.

Learn [more](#).

Source: EPA Water Headlines, 9/8/2016

Conservation Districts: Farm Inspections Not Resolved In Chesapeake Bay Watershed

Pennsylvania's conservation districts Thursday voiced their concerns about DEP's Chesapeake Bay "reboot strategy" during the Chesapeake Bay Program's Citizens' Advisory Committee to the Chesapeake Executive Council meeting in Lancaster.

Lancaster County Conservation District Manager Christopher Thompson addressed the Committee on behalf of the PA Association of Conservation Districts.

Thompson briefed attendees on the issues conservation districts are now facing as a result of the reboot strategy.

In January 2016, conservation districts were asked to assist the Department of Environmental Protection with farm inspections. These inspections would check farms for manure management and erosion and sedimentation control plans.

Local conservation district boards are faced with the decision whether or not to go into the program.

However, funding for their Chesapeake Bay Technician staff depends upon their willingness to inspect farms.

Some conservation districts are hesitant to sign on because it would change the district's role from technical assistance to compliance.

Conservation districts have had meetings with the DEP in regards to the farm inspections conservation districts have been asked to conduct. This has been a step forward since many concerns the conservation districts have were addressed by DEP.

However, there are still some issues of concern with consistency and privacy for the farms that are inspected.

"Although many of the conservation districts' concerns have already been adequately addressed by DEP, there are still two outstanding issues – the discrepancies between the Statement of Policy, the inspection form, and the contract, and privacy concerns when a district employee obtains

information generated by federal entities," said Thompson.

Another concern still unresolved related to a privacy issue with documentation obtained from a federal agency, such as U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Section 1619 of the Federal Privacy Act prohibits any entity from sharing information obtained from federal documentation, such as a conservation plan.

Before any information is obtained by the district employee and given to DEP, the farmer should sign an "Authorization for Release of Records" form as authorization to release the records.

Attempts to incorporate the federal release form into the DEP inspection form are ongoing with the goal of streamlining the process.

"How many of Pennsylvania's conservation districts will take on farm inspections as part of their duties? Only time will tell," said Thompson.

Funding Key to Success

The PACD testimony also highlighted the critical role funding plays in the installation of farm best management practices.

"Funding is the key to success for Best Management Practice (or BMP) installation. Without adequate state and federal funding, farmers cannot afford to install the BMP's necessary to significantly reduce nutrients getting into our local waterways, and ultimately the Bay.

"PACD proposes a significant amount of public funding dedicated toward water quality improvement. This funding should be distributed at the local level with conservation districts being an integral part of the planning and implementation process.

"They know the area's geology, the landowners, and the local government leaders to effectively and efficiently distribute the funding."

Click [here](#) to read the full testimony.

The Chesapeake Bay Program's Citizens Advisory Council is a group of partners chosen by the Governors of Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia and the Mayor of Washington DC. This group provides advice on the Chesapeake Bay Program and the Bay watershed cleanup goals.

For more information on this and other issues affecting county conservation districts, visit the PA Association of Conservation Districts [website](#).

For more information on Bay-related efforts, visit DEP's Chesapeake Bay [webpage](#).

Source: PA Environmental Digest, 9/12/2016

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