

## EPD declares Level 1 Drought in Walton County

With Walton County included among the 53 Georgia Counties under newly declared drought conditions, the Walton County Water Department is asking customers to practice wise water use. See the Tips for Water Conservation tab for ideas on how to conserve water.

On Friday, Sept. 9, 2016 the state declared a Level 1 Drought Response for virtually all of the counties within metro Atlanta and North Georgia. According to the Georgia Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Environmental Protection Division (EPD), the 53 counties impacted by this Level 1 Drought Response declaration are experiencing severe to extreme drought conditions.

“North Georgia has had a hot, dry summer and the fall season is historically a dry time of the year,” says Bill Murphey, State Climatologist. “Current drought conditions are likely to continue through the fall season, although tropical activity and rain-producing systems can provide beneficial rainfall.”

As a public water utility operating under EPD permits and serving customers within the region receiving a Level 1 Drought Response, Walton County Water is implementing a public information campaign to notify its customers of the current drought, its potential impact on water supplies, and the need for community-wide water conservation.

“A Level 1 Drought Response is a good opportunity to partner with our public water utilities to promote good stewardship and to remind Georgians of the importance of using water wisely,” says Richard Dunn, EPD Director.

“Our water resources remain in good condition with our suppliers not facing any water shortages at this time. The current status of our stable water supply protects us from having to implement even more stringent watering restrictions than what’s in place,” says Morris Jordan, Walton County Water Director. “While we encourage wise water use and compliance with the current outdoor watering schedule by our customers, we have invested in water supply resources and infrastructure over the years to be able to handle drought conditions such as those that we are experiencing presently. The Hard Labor Creek Project will give us even more protection when it comes on line in the future. Through proper long-term planning, we are more prepared to manage drought each year even with an increase in customers and water consumption.”

Water restrictions remain those that are required and outlined under the Georgia Water Stewardship Act of 2010. The outdoor water use rules and exemptions are outlined at <http://epd.georgia.gov/water-conservation>. More detail for the restrictions are available in the FAQ section on this website.