

## CHAPTER 8

### WATER CONSERVATION AND WATER EMERGENCY PLAN

#### 8.1 POLICIES

Section 3.3 of the County Charter allows for the adoption of appropriate County ordinances to protect the health, safety, and general welfare of its residents, including specific authority to adopt ordinances to protect potable water supply wells and wellfields.

Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department recognizes that during times of severe water shortage, the potential to harm water supply wellfields can exist when water supply pumping to meet public demands exceeds rainfall replenishment. Achieving the appropriate balance requires coordination between the Department and the South Florida Water Management District. Therefore, in accordance with Section 27-37, Palm Beach County Code, it is the intent of the Board of County Commissioners to protect the County's water resources from the harmful effects of over-utilization during periods of water shortage. Under such conditions, available water supplies will be allocated by assisting the South Florida Water Management District (District) in the implementation of its water shortage plan, as required by subsection 373.246(1), Florida Statutes and implemented in accordance with Chapter 40E-21, Florida Administrative Code (FAC).

Furthermore, and in the case of mechanical failure of a constructed facility, such as a water plant or a wastewater plant, or in the event of an imminent water security threat and during state and local emergencies, the Department may implement certain emergency measures in the area served by the Department, accomplished by the establishment, implementation, and maintenance of an effective Emergency Operations Plan. This plan complies with disaster preparedness requirements outlined in applicable federal, state, and local codes which affect the District. The District's Administrative Manual and the Emergency Operations Plan contain guidelines explaining staff responsibilities and procedures. These documents will be periodically updated.

The provisions of this chapter shall apply in the unincorporated area of the County and the incorporated area of the County located within the service area of the Palm Beach County Water Utilities Department, subject to the geographic boundaries of the water shortage or water shortage emergency.

#### 8.2 PROCEDURES

##### 8.2.1 RESTRICTIONS DUE TO DROUGHT

Restrictions on water use due to drought conditions shall be implemented and enforced in accordance with District regulations. The District may order any combination in lieu of or in addition to the restrictions in Chapter 40E-21, FAC.

The Department shall implement the restrictions imposed by the District, notifying all Customers served by the Department that water restrictions have been imposed. Notification may be made by bill inserts, messages on the monthly bill, and press releases. The Department shall also notify its customers in the same manner when such restrictions have been lifted.

Enforcement of water restrictions shall not be the responsibility of Department, but rather in accordance with District Rule subchapter 40E-21.421(1), F.A.C., shall be the responsibility of local law enforcement officials. Warnings, however, may be noticed to utility customers observed to not being in compliance with published water restrictions during periods of drought.

## **8.2.2 RESTRICTIONS DUE TO MECHANICAL FAILURE OF A CONSTRUCTED FACILITY**

When a water shortage occurs due to a mechanical failure of a constructed facility, such as a water plant, the Department may implement temporary emergency procedures to alleviate the shortage:

- (a.) The Department may purchase Potable Water from adjacent utilities through existing interlocal agreements providing for emergency interconnects.
- (b.) The Department may limit or stop the sale of Potable Water to adjacent utilities through existing interlocal agreements providing for emergency interconnects.
- (c.) The Department may increase or decrease water pressure in all or portions of the Department's Potable Water distribution system.
- (d.) The Department may request that Customers voluntarily reduce their usage of Potable Water.
- (e.) The Department may request that the Board of County Commissioners seek a water shortage declaration from the District.

## **8.2.3 RESTRICTIONS DUE TO WATER QUALITY**

When water quality has been compromised due to the intrusion of a contaminant entering a constructed facility, such as a water treatment plant, water storage facility or the distribution piping system, the Department may implement temporary emergency procedures to detect and eliminate the source of the water quality emergency, including:

- (a.) The Department may purchase Potable Water from adjacent utilities through existing interlocal agreements providing for emergency interconnects.
- (b.) The Department may limit or stop the sale of Potable Water to adjacent utilities through existing interlocal agreements providing for emergency interconnects.
- (c.) The Department may issue a boil water notice within affected areas where biological contamination is suspected or known.
- (d.) The Department may limit, stop the sale of Potable Water, or otherwise issue use restriction notices to affected service area customers.

Any decision and action to restrict potable water use for water quality purposes shall be taken at the discretion of the Director of the Water Utilities Department after coordination with the Palm Beach County Administrator, the Palm Beach County Division of Emergency Management and the Palm Beach County Health Department.