

Georgia Department of Natural Resources

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Georgia EPD Order Brings Some Relief for Parched Landscape, Pools

Citizens in 61 drought-stricken north Georgia counties can fill swimming pools and hand water their landscape effective immediately, according to an order issued by the director of the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD). However the water use exemptions must also have the approval of the local water provider, such as a local government or water utility.

Hand watering of existing landscape must be done between midnight and 10 a.m. on designated days based on odd-numbered and even-numbered addresses for no more than 25 minutes. Odd-numbered addresses may water Tuesday, Thursday and Sunday. Even-numbered addresses may water Monday, Wednesday and Saturday. Hand watering is defined as one person with one garden hose with a spray nozzle that shuts off automatically when it is released.

There are no clock or calendar restrictions on the filling of swimming pools, although local water providers must also agree to the pool exemption. The swimming pool exemption was granted due to concerns that neglected and partially filled pools could pose risks to public health and safety, said EPD Director Carol A. Couch.

Director Couch also ordered that people who successfully complete an Outdoor Water Use Registration Program be allowed to water newly installed landscape up to three days a week following the odd-even schedule for a period of ten weeks following planting. Registrants learn proper watering techniques and the importance of water conservation. The Outdoor Water Use Registration Program will be available online at www.urbanagcouncil.com beginning March 15, 2008. Citizens can also contact their county extension agents for information about the registration.

Director Couch also announced that starting April 1, monthly water use in the 61-county drought area would be compared to April-September 2007 average monthly water use. Governor Sonny Perdue has ordered that water use in the region be reduced by at least 10 percent, and emphasized that water conservation goals must still be achieved even with the exemptions.

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