



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION

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For Immediate Release

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Georgia EPD Elevates Drought Response Levels, Further Restricts Outdoor Water Use

Faced with worsening drought conditions in about three-fourths of the state, along with water supply concerns in some areas, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) has declared it will raise the state's drought response to Level 2 in 52 counties and impose a Level 1 Drought Response in an additional 58 counties.

"Today's declaration is driven by an extended period of little or no rain and increasing dryness in the impacted areas," said EPD Director Richard Dunn. "What's more, there is little hope for relief as weather forecasters expect an unusually warm, dry winter across most of the state."

This week marks the 24th week of continuous severe drought in northwest Georgia, the 22nd week for the Atlanta metro area, the 21st week in northeastern parts of the state and the 15th week in central Georgia. In addition there is a decline in soil moisture and some streams are flowing at or below record lows set during droughts in 2007 and 2011.

During a Level 2 Drought Response, outdoor landscape watering is only allowed two days a week determined by odd and even-numbered addresses. Even-numbered addresses and properties without numbered addresses may water on Wednesday and Saturday between 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. Odd-numbered addresses may water Thursday and Sunday between 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m.

Prohibited outdoor water uses include:

- Washing hard surfaces such as streets and sidewalks.
- Water for ornamental purposes, such as fountains.
- The use of fire hydrants, except for firefighting and public safety.
- Non-commercial washing of vehicles.
- Non-commercial pressure washing.
- Fundraising car washes.

Those counties assigned a Level 2 Drought Response are: Banks, Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Athens-Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dade, Dawson, DeKalb, Douglas, Fannin, Fayette, Floyd, Forsyth, Fulton, Gilmer, Gordon, Gwinnett, Habersham, Hall, Haralson, Harris, Heard, Henry, Jackson, Lamar, Lumpkin, Meriwether, Monroe, Morgan, Murray, Newton, Oconee, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Polk, Rockdale, Spalding, Troup, Union, Upson, Walker, Walton, White and Whitfield.

Haralson County and the cities of Griffin, Tallapoosa, Waco and Buchanan have reported water supply issues and have been granted EPD variances to impose water use restrictions greater than state requirements.

A Level 1 Drought Response requires that public water systems implement a public information campaign that includes, 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.

Those counties assigned a Level 1 Drought Response are: Baker, Baldwin, Bibb, Bleckley, Calhoun, Chattahoochee, Clay, Columbia, Crawford, Crisp, Decatur, Dooly, Dougherty, Early, Elbert, Franklin, Glascock, Greene, Hancock, Hart, Houston, Jasper, Jefferson, Jones, Laurens, Lee, Lincoln, Macon, Madison, Marion, McDuffie, Miller, Mitchell, Muscogee, Oglethorpe, Peach, Pulaski, Putnam, Quitman, Rabun, Randolph, Richmond, Schley, Seminole, Stephens, Stewart, Sumter, Talbot, Taliaferro, Taylor, Terrell, Towns, Twiggs, Warren, Washington, Webster, Wilkes and Wilkinson.

The following activities are **allowed** under both Level 1 and Level 2 Drought Responses:

- 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 hand-watering with a hose with automatic cutoff or handheld container may be done at any time of day.
- General landscape watering may be done between 4:00 p.m. and 10:00 a.m. on the designated days.

More water conservation information is available at <http://epd.georgia.gov/water-conservation>.

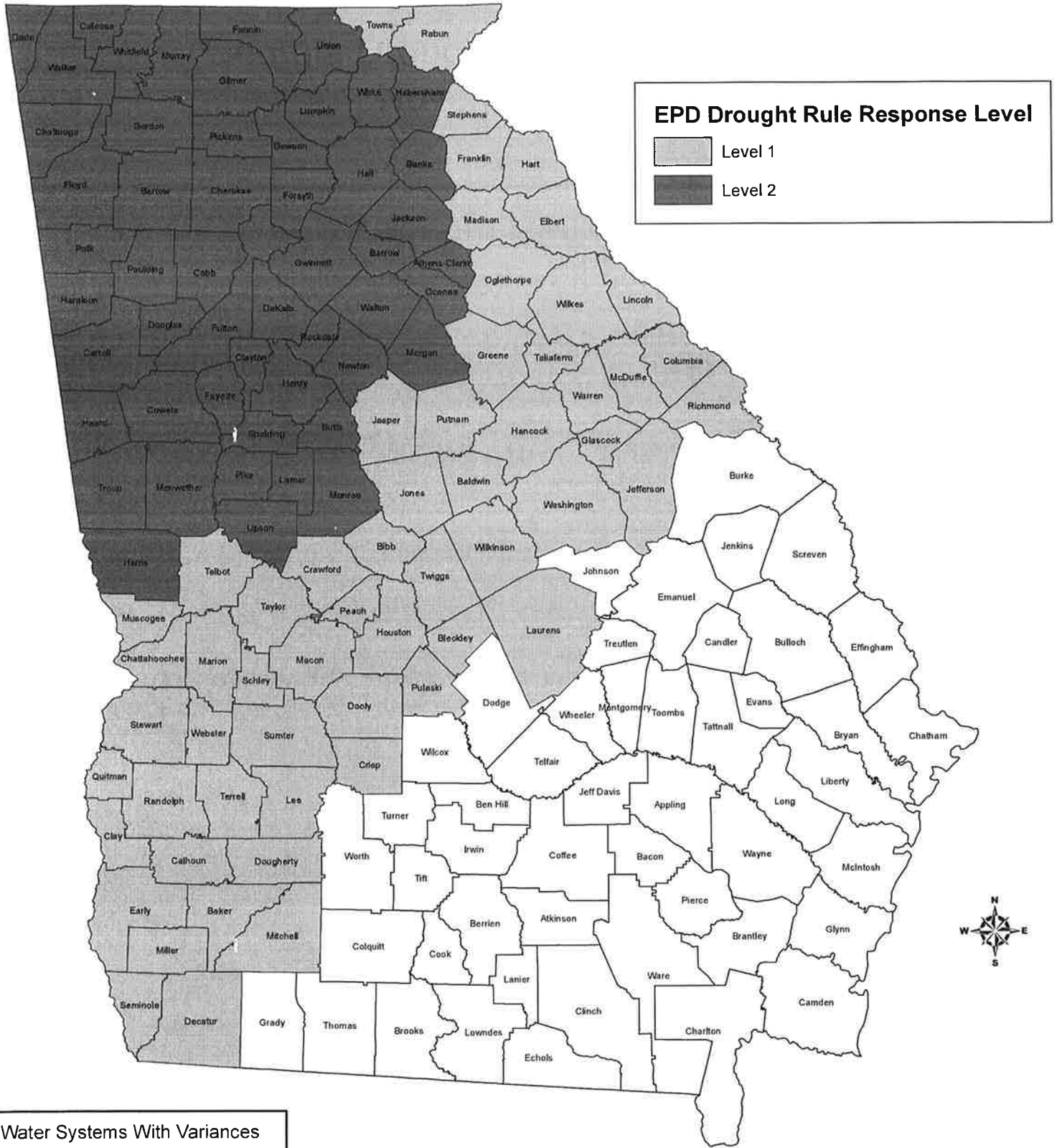
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Georgia Drought Response Declaration

November 17, 2016





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Level 2 Drought Response

A Level 2 Drought Response is currently in place in the following 52 Georgia counties: Banks, Barrow, Bartow, Butts, Carroll, Catoosa, Chattooga, Cherokee, Athens-Clarke, Clayton, Cobb, Coweta, Dade, Dawson, Dekalb, Douglas, Fannin, Fayette, Floyd, Forsyth, Fulton, Gilmer, Gordon, Gwinnett, Habersham, Hall, Haralson, Harris, Heard, Henry, Jackson, Lamar, Lumpkin, Meriwether, Monroe, Morgan, Murray, Newton, Oconee, Paulding, Pickens, Pike, Polk, Rockdale, Spalding, Troup, Union, Upson, Walker, Walton, White and Whitfield.

In addition to the requirements in Drought Response Level 1, Drought Response Level 2 limits outdoor landscape watering to two days a week determined by odd and even-numbered addresses. Even-numbered and unnumbered addresses may water on Wednesday and Saturday before 10:00 a.m. and after 4:00 p.m. Odd-numbered addresses may water Thursday and Sunday before 10:00 a.m. and after 4:00 p.m.

Under a Level 2 Drought Response, the following outdoor water uses are allowed daily at any time of the day by anyone:

- Commercial agricultural operations as defined in Code Section 1-3-3;
- Capture and reuse of cooling system condensate or storm water in compliance with applicable local ordinances and state guidelines;
- Reuse of gray water in compliance with Code Section 31-3-5.2 and applicable local board of health regulations adopted pursuant thereto;
- Use of reclaimed waste water by a designated user from a system permitted by the Environmental Protection Division of the department to provide reclaimed waste water;
- Irrigation of personal food gardens;
- Irrigation of new and replanted plant, seed, or turf in landscapes, golf courses, or sports turf fields during installation and for a period of 30 days immediately following the date of installation;
- Drip irrigation or irrigation using soaker hoses;
- Handwatering with a hose with automatic cutoff or handheld container;
- Use of water withdrawn from private water wells or surface water by an owner or operator of property if such well or surface water is on said property;
- Irrigation of horticultural crops held for sale, resale, or installation;
- Irrigation of athletic fields, golf courses, or public turf grass recreational areas;
- Installation, maintenance, or calibration of irrigation systems; or
- Hydroseeding

The following outdoor water uses are prohibited:

- washing hard surfaces such as streets and sidewalks,
- water for ornamental purposes such as fountains,
- the use of fire hydrants except for firefighting, public safety and flushing,
- non-commercial vehicle washing including fundraising car washes, and non-commercial pressure washing.

Public water systems must also select and implement four or more items from the Drought Response Strategies Menu in the Rule. Examples include an intense public information campaign, restaurants restricted to serving water only upon request, street cleaning prohibited and pool cover requirements.

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