

October 7, 2021

Dear Water Suppliers in the Mississippi Headwaters watershed,

This week's Drought Monitor map shows that 41% of the Mississippi Headwaters watershed is in severe drought and only 1% is in extreme drought with the remainder of the watershed in moderate drought or abnormally dry. According to the State Drought Plan triggers, this means the watershed can now be **moved to the Drought Watch Phase**. DNR continues to closely monitor the streamflow levels and flows in the Mississippi River. This means the goal of reducing water use to 50% above January use **has been relaxed**. However, continued water conservation efforts are still needed.

Water Supplier Actions Needed

1. All Water Suppliers:

- a) Monitor potential conflicts and problems and notify DNR of source conflicts.
- b) Provide conservation information and request customers to implement voluntary measures to reduce water use.
- c) Fall hydrant flushing may proceed as needed, consider a smaller version, reducing water use where and when possible. The Minnesota Dept. of Health recommends that water suppliers: develop a hydrant flushing program to maintain water quality in the distribution system.

2. Change from Warning Phase: If your community implemented stronger conservation measures during the Drought Warning Phase, these may be relaxed if your water supply situation is sustainable. If you have storage capacity concerns, well limitations or other issues, you may continue to keep strong local ordinances to protect your water supply.

3. Other Suggestions:

- Additional hydrant flushing guidance:
 - <https://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/environment/water/docs/com/buildutil.pdf>
 - National Fire Protection Association: Fire hydrants should be flushed at least annually to verify operation, address repairs, and verify reliability.
 - Minnesota Rural Water Association: <http://www.mrwa.com/MNWWMnl/21-Distribution%20System%20Operation.pdf>
- Please alert your local [DNR hydrologists](#) to any water supply concerns or issues during the fall.
- [Sign up](#) to receive GovDelivery updates about drought in Minnesota, drought preparations and response, and important ways to conserve water.

Best regards,

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