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Water Providers Announce Stage 2 Water Restrictions

Steamboat Springs, CO – With the water content in the snowpack at 64% of average and forecasts for a warm spring and dry summer, the four districts that provide water to the Steamboat Springs area - the Mt. Werner Water District, the City of Steamboat Springs District, the Steamboat II Metro District, and the Tree Haus Metro District – have issued a drought warning and have announced the Stage 2 water restrictions in accordance with Steamboat Springs Water Conservation Plan.

The Stage 2 water restriction will go into effect May 1st.

“The May 1st date will allow landscapers, businesses, and homeowners to set timers to the Stage 2 watering schedule right at the start of the season”, said Jay Gallagher, Mt. Werner Water General Manager. Early implementation will also allow lawns, shrubs, and trees to adapt early in the growing season and avoid the shock of water reductions in the middle of the growing season.

Steamboat depends upon a combination of natural flows and reservoir releases from the Fish Creek watershed to carry it through the summer, fall, and winter. “Given the thin snowpack and climate forecasts, we expect that the natural flows in Fish Creek will drop quickly requiring us to release reservoir water much earlier than normal to meet irrigation demand”, said Gallagher. “Reducing water demand will allow us to strike a balance between conserving our water supplies in the reservoirs and maintaining the riparian health of Fish Creek and the Yampa River.”

Reducing consumption will also ease the demand placed on water filtration facilities and lower operating costs. “In the long run, wise water use and lowering per capita usage will also allow the community to defer the large capital costs of an expansion of the filtration plant,” said Kelly Heaney, Water Resources Manager for the City of Steamboat Springs.

As of April 1st, NRCS SNOTEL data and the NOAA climate forecast indicate that the following criteria for triggering Stage 2 Restrictions are likely to be met:

- April 1st SWE at the Tower SNOTEL site below 80% of average;
- an early run-off (before July 1) resulting in low flows in the Fish Creek Watershed;
- higher than average temperatures within the period of May through August.

Effective May 1st: Stage 2 Water Restrictions

- Potable water shall be used for beneficial purposes and should not be wasted.

- No outdoor watering 10AM - 6PM.
- Watering schedule based on the last number of customer street address. If multiple addresses are served by a single system, then landscapers should choose one or the other schedule.

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--------|--------|---------|-------------|----------|--------|----------|
| Even | Odd | Even | No Watering | Odd | Even | Odd |

- Vehicle washing at residences only with a bucket or spring-loaded hose nozzle. Residents are encouraged to use biodegradable detergent and to wash the vehicle on a permeable surface.
- Avoid wasting potable water such as washing hard surfaces (eg. driveways, sidewalks, parking areas). Use a broom, powerbroom, powerblower, compressed air, or vacuum. Residents and contractors may powerwash siding or wooden decks in preparation for painting or staining.
- Any water feature that uses potable water must be a recycling system and must have an approved backflow prevention device on its make-up water supply. Running an outdoor water feature that sprays or splashes water into the air or has a surface area greater than 200 square feet is prohibited.
- No use of domestic water for dust control.
- Swimming pools are limited to one filling per year, unless draining for repairs.
- Permits may be secured for newly-sodded lawns and newly-planted trees for up to 14 consecutive days and for newly-seeded lawns for up to 25 consecutive days.

Tips for conserving water:

- Avoid watering in windy conditions.
- Adjust sprinklers to avoid watering hard surfaces.
- Set timers to avoid over-watering. Less water will induce grassroots to seek water deeper in the soil horizon which will strengthen your lawn.
- Our clayey soils slow the penetration of water, so it is better to water for three short intervals than for one long interval.
- When irrigating with a hose, use a spring-loaded nozzle, not a free-running hose.
- Cut your lawn no shorter than 3 inches to reduce soil moisture loss and to promote deeper roots.
- Avoid planting trees and shrubs or sodding new lawns during the drier, hotter months.
- Plant native grasses and shrubs or drought-tolerant species in place of water-intensive species.

For more information on water saving tips and a list of drought-resistant plant species, please visit the City or District websites: www.steamboatsprings.net or www.mwwater.com .