

Understanding Wayland's water ban

TO THE EDITOR:

One of the vital services the town of Wayland provides is an adequate supply of safe and clean drinking water.

After heavy spring rains, we are now in the midst of a dry and hot summer. Rainfall for April, May and June has actually been below average. However, the watering ban has some townspeople puzzled and questioning its need.

During the summer the town cannot pump enough water to keep up with increased consumer demand. Most of that increased demand is for outdoor irrigation.

Keeping the town's tanks filled enough to have water for essential needs – public health, safety, fire fighting and unforeseen emergencies – is the priority.

The pumps and pipes that carry water from our wells to users all over town, and to the storage tank on Reeves Hill, have a finite capacity. That capacity was exceeded by significantly increased demand before the water ban.

The less restrictive June 1 conservation measure declared by the Board of Public Works was not effective. By the July 4 holiday weekend, the level in the town's tanks had fallen dramatically.

The DPW department had no choice but to impose a second, more stringent watering ban. Thanks to the public's cooperation, water levels in the town's tanks have been slowly rising, but the tanks are not full or close to full.

There is a new page of information posted on the town website ([www.wayland.ma.us/Pages/WaylandMA_DPW/Need%20For%20Water%20Conservation%20Explained%20%20\(2\).pdf](http://www.wayland.ma.us/Pages/WaylandMA_DPW/Need%20For%20Water%20Conservation%20Explained%20%20(2).pdf)).

It explains the delicate balance between water supply and demand and the regulations the state imposes on our management of their resource. There are mandated limits on the amount of water the town is permitted to pump each day out of the aquifer. And that is true for other towns with their own wells regulated by the state.

What more can the public do? Outdoor water use causes the biggest drawdown. Postpone any fertilizing and seeding to the fall. Raise your lawnmower blade to at least 3 inches, and mow only when needed. An established lawn that has turned brown is dormant, not dead, and should green up in time as the weather changes.

Check for water leaks inside your home often associated with aging plumbing. If you suspect a leak, call 508-358-3699 or 508-358-3672, or e-mail the water

superintendent (dmillette@wayland.ma.us). They can help you with leak detection. It is surprising the amount of water a minor leak can accumulate. The company responsible for maintaining an outdoor irrigation system should check the system for outdoor leaks each spring.

As consumers, we can also pay closer attention to how we use drinking water, just like we have changed our habits to conserve on fuel. How much do we really need to run that faucet during various chores?

Some townspeople choose to pay more for higher water consumption, but in the summer, when the town's tank levels drop too low, public health and safety risks increase for everyone.

Please comply with the declared watering restrictions so we can protect our water supply and our community while enjoying a safe and fun summer.

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Wellhead Protection Committee

<http://www.wickedlocal.com/wayland/highlight/x386858674/Letters-to-the-editor-for-the-week-of-July-22>