

Water Restriction Update — Why Restrictions Remain in Place

Burke County continues to operate under water restrictions due to ongoing drought conditions in the Catawba-Wateree River Basin. Here's what residents should know:

- The **Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group** meets every two weeks to assess conditions. Their next meeting is scheduled for **August 11**.
- Water restriction status is governed by the **Low Inflow Protocol (LIP)**, which uses three separate criteria — reservoir storage, drought monitoring, and 6-month average streamflow. **All three** must improve before restrictions can be eased; currently the region remains at **LIP Stage 2**.
- Two of the three triggers (reservoir storage at 80.8% of target, and the drought monitor index) are trending toward improvement. However, the **6-month average streamflow trigger remains at only 40.4%** of the long-term average — and because it's a rolling average, meaningful improvement likely won't show up until **fall**.
- In short: restrictions are not being "forgotten" — they're tied to a regional, multi-agency review process with built-in delays, not a local decision.

We'll continue posting updates as new information becomes available from each advisory group meeting.