



Dear Smith Mountain Lake Customer,

Bedford Water would like to make you aware that we are currently operating under a **Water Shortage Alert** for the Smith Mountain Lake system.

This stage is declared when water supplies fall below seasonal averages and may not be adequate to meet normal demand if conditions persist. As part of this alert, we are asking all customers in the SML service area to **voluntarily conserve water**, with a goal of reducing overall usage by approximately **5–10%**.

We recognize that recent rainfall—and rain in the forecast—is encouraging news. We are hopeful that these conditions will improve our water supply situation in the near future, especially since the lake is rising 0.01 feet per hour. However, until we see sustained recovery, your cooperation is essential to help protect the reliability of the system.

According to the Virginia DEQ, “All of Virginia is in a drought warning, with the exception of Isle of Wight County, and the cities of Chesapeake, Norfolk, Portsmouth, Suffolk, and Virginia Beach in southeast Virginia, which remain in a drought watch.”

During this alert, customers are encouraged to limit or eliminate **non-essential water use**, including:

1. **Ornamental purposes:**

- i. Examples: Fountains, reflecting pools, and/or artificial waterfalls.

2. **Outdoor non-commercial watering (public or private):**

- i. Examples: Gardens, lawns, parks, golf courses (except greens), playing fields, and/or other recreational areas.
- ii. Exceptions:
 - a. Agricultural use for the maintenance of livestock to the extent that no other sources are available.
 - b. Watering by commercial nurseries at a minimum level necessary to maintain stock, to the extent that sources of water other than fresh water are not available or feasible to use.
 - c. The Executive Director of Bedford Water may grant exceptions to community facilities of particular social importance, provided that sufficient supplies are available. Exceptions are to be rescinded if the supply situation worsens.

- d. Use of fresh water at a minimum rate necessary to implement re-vegetation following earth moving, where such re-vegetation is required pursuant to an erosion and sedimentation control plan adopted pursuant to law or regulation, to the extent that sources of water other than fresh water are not available or feasible to use.
 - e. Watering of shrubbery, trees, lawn, grass, plants or other vegetation from a watering can or other container not exceeding three (3) gallons in capacity.
3. **Filling and operation of swimming pools:**
- i. Examples: Manufactured or constructed recreational pools that hold more than 30 gallons.
 - ii. Exceptions (unless a contamination of water supplies initiated the shortage condition):
 - a. Residential pools which serve more than 25 dwelling units.
 - b. Pools used by health care facilities for patient care and rehabilitation.
 - c. Municipal pools.
4. **Washing of motor vehicles:**
- i. Examples: Automobiles, trucks, boats, and trailers.
 - ii. Exceptions:
 - a. Commercial car and truck washes.
5. **Serving water in restaurants, clubs, or eating-places:**
- i. Examples: Drinking water for customers.
 - ii. Exceptions:
 - a. Specific request or order by customer for drinking water.
6. **Fire Hydrants:**
- i. Examples: Any purpose, including use of sprinkler caps and testing fire apparatus and for fire department drills.
 - ii. Exceptions:
 - a. Firefighting.
 - b. Health protection purposes, if specifically approved by the Bedford County Health Department.
 - c. Certain testing and drills by the fire department, if in the interest of public safety and approved by Bedford Water's Board of Directors.
7. **Flushing of sewers and hydrants; washing of paved areas.**
- i. Examples: Cleaning sidewalks, driveways, etc.

- ii. Exceptions:
 - a. As needed to ensure public health and safety, approved by the Executive Director of Bedford Water.
8. Air conditioning:
- i. Examples: Refilling cooling tower after draining.
 - ii. Exceptions:
 - a. Refilling for startup at the beginning of the cooling season.
 - b. Make-up of water during the cooling season.

Reducing these types of uses, even temporarily, can make a meaningful difference in ensuring sufficient supply for essential needs such as drinking, hygiene, and fire protection.

Water conservation is always important, but it becomes especially critical during periods like this. By working together now, we can help minimize the need for more restrictive measures later.

We appreciate your understanding and cooperation. Updates will be provided as conditions change, and we remain optimistic that improved weather conditions will allow us to lift this alert soon.

If you have any questions or would like additional tips on conserving water, please visit our website brwa.com or contact our office at (540) 586-7679.

Thank you for helping us protect our shared water resources.

Sincerely,

Bedford Water