



**BIRMINGHAM
WATER WORKS**

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Operations and Technical Services

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January 24, 2017

Dear Mayor Welch,

After receiving more than six inches of rain since January 1, 2017, and three inches of rain in December 2016, the Birmingham Water Works (BWW) is announcing the return to the Stage-2 "Drought Watch" phase of our Drought Management Plan (DMP). The lack of rain across the state over the last five months of 2016 forced the BWW to move into higher levels of water restrictions for customers in order for us to effectively manage our water resources. Stage-3 "Drought Warning" was announced on October 19th, and Stage-4 "Extreme Drought Emergency" was announced on November 4th. These advanced stages typically include surcharges for excessive water users after 30 days of announcement of the appropriate drought stage of the DMP. The current drought was so significant that the BWW had to move to the next higher stage of the DMP before surcharges were enforced from the previous stage. The December rains came at the best possible time and resulted in the BWW not collecting any surcharge fees for excessive water users. The cooperation from your municipality in enforcing your drought ordinance was a major part in how the water system was able to operate during this historic drought. Alongside our customers' cooperation, the December 2016 and January 2017 rains have raised the water level in Lake Purdy from a low of 26.2% of its capacity on November 28, 2016 to 54.6 % as of January 23, 2017.

This is the time of year that customers typically use the least amount of water, especially for outdoor purposes; therefore, remaining at the Stage-4 phase of the DMP during this time of year is no longer an advantage as a water management strategy; therefore, we are asking that you rescind your drought ordinance as soon as possible to allow the citizens and customers of our community to return to their normally conservative water usage. This includes allowing the various fire departments and/or fire authorities to resume their fire hydrant flow testing that were suspended during the fall of 2016 because of the drought restrictions.

The current drought is still active. The region is still more than 10 inches behind in normal rainfall based on typical August to January accumulations. The Stage-2 "Drought Watch" phase is a voluntary phase, with no surcharges. Other key elements of the phase can be found in the entire Drought Management Plan, viewable at <https://www.bwwb.org/droughttips>.

The BWW is hopeful that the projected spring rains returns Lake Purdy, and all the lakes in the state, to their full pool levels before summer. We will officially announce a return to our Stage Two "Drought Watch" later today. Information will be broadcast to the public by various media outlets and press releases at that time. Thank you for your cooperation as we continue "Serving Your Community and Preserving the Environment".

Sincerely,

Darryl R. Jones, P.E.
Assistant General Manager – Operations and Technical Services