From: Herbold, Stacey
Subject: Drought Update: Drought Conditions Intensify
Date: Thursday, August 20, 2020 2:05:17 PM
Importance: High

Dear Municipal Contacts: (Please forward to governing board.)

Last week 48% of the state was categorized as experiencing drought and this week 69% of the state is categorized as experiencing drought. Also, for the first time this season, portions of the state been elevated from "moderate drought" (D1) to "severe drought" (D2). Areas experiencing severe drought include Rockingham County, Merrimack County, over half of Strafford County, as well as a small area of Belknap and Hillsborough county. To determine conditions in your region, see the drought restrictions and conditions map.

Relief from drought conditions is not looking promising. The heat and humidity are forecast to return tomorrow. Thunderstorms are also forecast for Friday and through early next week, but not widespread enough to be significant. The 8-14 day precipitation outlook favors above normal precipitation, but the indicator is not strong meaning there is only a slight chance of above normal precipitation. The 8-14 day temperature outlook indicator is also not strong, but predicts above normal temperatures in the south and below normal temperatures in the north.

NHDES is urging municipalities in areas experiencing drought to implement municipal-wide lawn watering restrictions as authorized by RSA 41:11-d, which allows municipalities, including village districts, to restrict all or some lawn watering activities on private well owners and community water systems within municipal boundaries. Water supply shortages are more common during severe drought; therefore, lawn watering restrictions should be stricter in areas experiencing severe drought. NHDES is also working with public water suppliers to implement restrictions. To date, 134 community water systems have implemented outdoor water use restrictions. Municipalities are urged to work with local community water systems on implementing coordinated restrictions.

See Drought Guidance for Municipalities for guidance on adopting a lawn water restriction, public messaging, and providing emergency water supplies to the public.

Please report restrictions to NHDES for posting on the NHDES website using the Restriction Reporting Form. Please also inform residents to report residential well shortages using the Residential Well Impact Survey form. NHDES will track well impacts so as to provide current information on drought impacts in your region.

Stacey Herbold
Water Conservation Program
Water Use Registration and Reporting Program
NHDES Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau
29 Hazen Drive, P.O. Box 95
Concord, NH 03302-0095
PH: (603) 271-6685
FAX: (603) 271-0656

It's a no brainer! WaterSense certified products, such as showerheads and toilets, save 20% more water than their similar counterparts and are guaranteed to perform as well or better.