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November 8,2024

To all water customers of The Union Township Municipal Authority of Berks County, Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) declared a Drought Watch on November 1, 2024 for 33 counties and a Drought Warning for 2 counties which includes Berks County.

Residents on drought watch are asked to reduce their individual water use by 5 to 10%, or a reduction of three to six gallons of water per day through voluntary conservation measures. Residents on drought warning are asked to reduce their individual water use by 10 to 15 percent, or a reduction of six to nine gallons of water per day through voluntary conservation measures.

Ways to Conserve Water at Home

There are many ways to conserve water at home, including:

- Run water only when necessary. Don't let the faucet run while brushing your teeth or shaving. Shorten the time you let the water run to warm up before showering.
- Run the dishwasher and washing machine less often, and only with full loads.
- Water your garden in the cooler evening or morning hours, and direct the water to the ground at the base of the plant, so you don't waste water through evaporation.
- Water your lawn only if necessary. Apply no more than 1 inch of water per week (use an empty can to determine how long it takes to water 1 inch). Avoid watering on windy and hot days. This pattern will encourage healthier, deeper grass roots. Over-watering is wasteful, encourages fungal growth and disease, and results in shallow, compacted root systems that are more susceptible to drought.
- When mowing your lawn, set the blades to 2-3 inches high. Longer grass shades the soil, improving moisture retention. It also grows thicker and develops a deeper root system, so it can better survive drought.
- Check for and repair household leaks. For example, a leaking toilet can waste up to 200 gallons of water daily.
- Sweep your sidewalk, deck, or driveway instead of hosing it off.
- Replace older appliances with high-efficiency, front-loading models that use about 30 percent less water and 40-50 percent less energy.
- Install low-flow plumbing fixtures and aerators on faucets.
- Set up a rain barrel to be ready to repurpose rain when it does fall.

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