

**City of Richmond Department of Public Utilities**  
**Frequently Asked Questions – Voluntary Water Conservation**  
**REVISED Sept. 14, 2010**

**1. What does a voluntary water conservation measure mean?**

Residents in the City of Richmond and surrounding counties are asked to voluntarily restrict water use. The biggest impact to residents with voluntary restriction is the watering of their lawns which is:

**Monday** - No watering, **Odd property addresses** - Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday  
**Even property addresses** - Wednesday, Friday, and Sunday.

This watering schedule spreads the water demand over the week so we don't have to pull as much water at one time out of the James River.

**2. Why did the City issue a Voluntary Water Conservation measure?**

The City of Richmond operates on a 14 day rolling average and in accordance with the requirements of our permit, whenever levels in the James River get down below 1200 cfs (cubic feet per second) or 3 ½ to 3 ¾ feet depth of water in the James River we must issue a voluntary water conservation measure.

**3. What is the current James River level?**

Currently our 14-day rolling average is 1,297 cfs. (as of Sept. 14, 2010)

**4. What are the stages/trigger levels for announcing conservation measures?**

Ready Alert – 1,300 cfs (cubic feet per second)  
Voluntary Conservation – 1,200 cfs  
Mandatory Conservation – 750 cfs

**5. What happens if someone doesn't comply with the water restrictions?**

Depending on individual usage amounts during mandatory conservation measures, DPU customers may also see a conservation rate surcharge on their utility bill as a result of DPU's water conservation rate.

**6. When did DPU's water conservation rate go into effect?**

July 1, 2008

**7. What does having a water-conservation rate mean to a DPU customer?**

During voluntary and mandatory conservation periods, customers who make the decision to use more than 140 percent of their normal winter water usage (water consumed during the months of December, January and February) will pay a higher commodity rate on their excess usage. This is to encourage conservation-friendly behavior

**8. The following is an example of the overage amount that a customer would be charged if they exceed their normal winter water usage during voluntary or mandatory water conservation measures.**

Example of Average Winter Monthly Consumption = 8 Ccf  
Conservation Charge Threshold (8 Ccf X 140%) = 11 Ccf

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Actual monthly consumption during conservation period = 20 Ccf

Consumption subject to conservation rate (20 Ccf – 11 Ccf) = 9 Ccf

In this example, 11 Ccf would be billed at the normal commodity rate and 9 Ccf would be billed at the higher conservation commodity rate (50% premium in voluntary; 100% premium in mandatory)

**9. How much longer will the restrictions last?**

Voluntary water restrictions, when implemented, typically run at least until October 31.

**10. Which localities does this voluntary restriction affect?**

It affects Goochland, Hanover, Henrico and the City of Richmond.

**11. Do all of the counties and the city of Richmond get water from the same source?**

Henrico County and the City of Richmond obtain their water from the James River. The City of Richmond also has Henrico, Chesterfield, and Hanover Counties as direct customers, and Goochland and Powhatan counties as indirect water customers.

Portions of Chesterfield County obtain their water from Lake Chesdin which is governed by the Appomattox Water Authority

**12. If we don't get any rain, what is the next step?**

Mandatory water restriction is the next step and that would take place if water in the James River falls below 750 cfs.

**The chart below outlines the categories included in the Voluntary Water Conservation Measure**

<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>CONSERVATION MEASURE</b>
Established Landscape, Lawns & Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Monday – no watering</li> <li>▪ Odd property addresses water Tue, Thur and Sat</li> <li>▪ Even property addresses water Wed, Fri and Sun (Odd/Even designation is determined by last digit of address #)</li> <li>▪ Bucket watering (five gallon max. permitted anytime)</li> </ul>
New Landscape	Unrestricted for first 10 days after planting, then limited to the "Established Landscape, Lawns and Gardens" measures
Vegetable Gardens	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited to any two days per week and between 8 p.m. and 10 a.m. on any day. Bucket watering is unrestricted</li> </ul>
Paved Areas Washing (Streets, Drives, Patios, Walks, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited to two days per week. Unrestricted for immediate health and safety concerns</li> </ul>
Vehicle Washing (Commercial Businesses Exempt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited to two days per week using a hand-held hose with an automatic shut-off nozzle</li> </ul>
Golf Courses (Greens Exempt)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited to 8 p.m. thru 10 a.m. on any day</li> </ul>
Swimming Pools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited to filling required to maintain health and safety</li> </ul>
Fountains (not included in Chesterfield County ordinance)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited to any two days per week and between 8 p.m. and 10 a.m. on any day</li> </ul>
Businesses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limited to essential uses</li> </ul>
Restaurants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ No restrictions</li> </ul>
All Other Consumption Uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Encourage conservation by any means</li> </ul>