

Water Restrictions Q and A

Q: Why are these restrictions being put in place?

A: Because of low snowfall last winter and low-to-average rainfall this spring, water levels in Nickle Lake (Weyburn's water source) are lower than normal. Although our water supply is adequate at the moment, we have to take action to ensure the shortage doesn't get worse and to ensure we have enough water in reserve for essential services like firefighting.

Q: How long will the restrictions be in place?

A: The current Restrictions are meant to stay in place as part of an overall management strategy to minimize future and more stringent restrictions if possible.

Q: I forgot to water my lawn on one of the allowed days? Can I catch up now on a non-scheduled day?

A: No. If we allowed exceptions like that, it would be too difficult to monitor and enforce the restrictions.

Q: What will happen if I don't follow the watering schedule?

A: This is a community effort and we are counting on Weyburn people to come together as a team. We will try to give warnings in the case of honest mistakes. If a resident wilfully disregards the bylaws, we will impose fines of \$250-\$1,000 for homeowners and \$2,500-\$10,000 for businesses. If necessary, as a last resort, we will consider cutting off water service to repeat offenders.

Q: Why is street sweeping still going on if we're so short of water?

A: Because we are still in the early stages of a water shortage, we are continuing to carry out all municipal maintenance activities that affect public health, safety and quality of life. If the water shortage becomes severe, we will consider cutting back non-essential public maintenance.

Q: Why are the sprinklers still running in public parks at all hours of the day?

A: They don't, they are programmed to run at night; if it is running during the day please call the Public Works office. The City has reduced the watering cycle from 60 minutes to 45 minutes for each zone in each park.

Q: Why are splash pads and swimming pools still operating if we are so short of water?

A: Because we are still in the early stages of a water shortage, we are continuing to carry out all municipal maintenance activities that affect public health, safety and quality

of life. As well, public water recreation facilities help encourage residents to cut back on water recreation activities at home. If the water shortage becomes severe, we will consider cutting back leisure-related water uses as well.

Q: Can my children still play in the home sprinklers during the day?

A: This is not currently prohibited by the bylaw. If the water shortage becomes more critical the City may have to restrict this activity. In the meantime, we would encourage residents to use public spray parks and pools.

Q: If we are so short of water, why are we starting a new spray park?

A: As with the City's other water leisure facilities, the new park will encourage residents to centralize their water play, thereby using less water. However, if the water shortage gets worse, we will consider restricting these facilities as well.

Q: I just planted / re-sodded my lawn. The bylaw will basically kill my new lawn. Can I get a special permit for an exemption?

A: New lawns are already specifically exempted from the water restrictions. You are required to get a Permit from City Hall; there is no charge for the permit. The permit will allow us to track who is exempt and prevent wrongfully charging someone under the bylaw.

Q: The bylaw states that the driveways cannot be washed. However, in order to seal a driveway and properly maintain it, they must be washed before applying a sealer. Will we have to get a permit for this?

A: Driveway sealers and other surface treatments used in construction are already specifically exempted from the water restrictions. No special permit is required. We would ask residents to carry out these activities responsibly and not allow the hose to run too long.

Q: Why is lawn and garden watering restricted to specific hours?

A: By watering during the cool times of day, in the early morning and evening, you avoid losing water to evaporation during the heat of the day.

Q: What can I do in-house to minimize water usage?

A: We would ask that residents be mindful and avoid any unnecessary household water use. There are many ways you can do this on a day-to-day basis; take shorter showers, flush your toilet less frequently, shut the water tap off while you are brushing your teeth, etc.

Q: Are there any restrictions on when I can bath or shower?

A: No, there are no restrictions on personal hygiene. In the meantime, we would ask that residents be mindful and avoid any unnecessary household water use.

Q: What happens if the shortage gets worse?

A: We are hopeful that, by taking these modest measures, we maintain an adequate water supply. However, if rainfall levels do not improve, we may need to consider further measures. These measures might include (but would not be limited to):

- restrictions on street sweeping
- restrictions on public park watering
- restrictions on hours of operation of water leisure facilities
- further restrictions or a complete ban on lawn and garden watering
- recommendations for restricting personal household water use