



# Water

N E W S

## Stage One Water Restrictions In Effect

*Local utilities, city officials urge conservation*

The San Antonio area is currently under drought restrictions, but the city’s residents are no strangers to dry weather.

“San Antonians know about drought,” noted SAWS CEO David Chardavoyne. “This city has weathered dry weather many times before. We’re counting on all San Antonians to cut back on water use. By working together and conserving, we can make it through these dry times.”



Stage One of the city’s drought plan is triggered when the level of the Edwards Aquifer drops to 650 feet or below at the J-17 monitoring well near Ft. Sam Houston. With ongoing predictions of dry weather, the decline is expected to continue.

Stage One begins at 650 ft. because that’s the level at which legal pumping limits on the aquifer kick in, reducing the volume of Edwards water available to SAWS by five percent. But that doesn’t mean San Antonio will run out of water any time soon.

“The pumping limits are there to preserve the spring flows in San Marcos and New Braunfels,” Chardavoyne added. “The restrictions not only help protect the endangered species who rely on the springs, but also the people downstream who rely on those rivers for irrigation.”

The major difference people will notice in Stage One is the one-day-per-week landscape watering schedule. Watering with a sprinkler or irrigation system is allowed only between midnight and 10 a.m. or between 8 p.m. and midnight on your assigned day, as determined by the last number of your street address (see above right).

According to the city’s Aquifer Management Plan ordinance, the level must stay above 650 ft. for 30 days to end Stage One water restrictions.

“Droughts put an extraordinary strain on the Edwards Aquifer,” said SAWS Vice President Janelle Okorie. “During hot weather, outside watering can comprise 40 percent or more of total water use for San Antonio. To be able to limit and structure most outside watering, and spread it out over specific days of the week, will make a tremendous difference in reducing that aquifer strain.”

## It’s not just about your lawn

*Lesser-Known Stage One Rules Designed to Save Water — Both Indoors and Out*

Did you know there are many other Stage One conservation measures in place that have nothing to do with your watering day?

SAWS comprehensive drought management plan is based on a city ordinance adopted in 2000 and amended in 2005. And while landscape watering rules account for the bulk of potential water savings outlined, there are other, lesser-known Stage One restrictions:

**Water waste is prohibited at all times.** Water waste includes allowing water to run off into a gutter, ditch, or drain; or failing to repair a controllable leak.

**Private residential swimming pools** must have a minimum of 25 percent of the surface area covered when not in use. Inflatable pool toys or floating decorations may be used. (Public, apartment, and community pools are exempt for safety reasons.)

**Hand watering** with a hand-held hose, soaker hose, drip irrigation, bucket or watering can is permitted any time and any day under Stage One. (Stage Two adds time-of-day restrictions.)

**Washing parking lots, driveways, sidewalks or other impervious cover is prohibited.**

Health and safety exceptions to this rule may be requested from SAWS in writing.

**Residential car washing** is allowed only on assigned watering days and times. A hose with an automatic shut-off nozzle or bucket of five gallons or less may be used. Water should not be

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### Stage One Watering Schedule

| Last Number of Street Address  | Day for Watering |
|--|------------------|
| 0 or 1   | Monday           |
| 2 or 3   | Tuesday          |
| 4 or 5   | Wednesday        |
| 6 or 7   | Thursday         |
| 8 or 9   | Friday           |
| <i>No watering on weekends. Metered accounts without an address water on Wednesdays.</i> |                  |

## Crews Working Long Hours Repairing Breaks

This summer's drought means extra work by many employees at SAWS. Through mid-August, there have been about 1,280 main breaks this year compared to 740 in 2005 for the same period. This count represent breaks that require an immediate interruption of service to our customers. Overall SAWS receives an average of about 600 calls per month regarding leaks.

To report leaks at any hour, call SAWS at 704-SAWS.

*SAWS crew repairs a water main break on Terrell Road.*



## New Check Acceptance Policy



Beginning August 2, SAWS will not accept check payments online, by mail, or in person from customers

that have recently had a check payment returned due to non-sufficient funds or other bank account issues. Blocking will be in place for 90 days after the date of the returned item.

Affected customers will still be able to pay with credit card, cash, or certified check. *Please don't send cash by mail.*

For more information on check acceptance policies, please contact Customer Service at 704-SAWS (704-7297).

## Not just about your lawn (cont.)

allowed to run into the street, and cars may not be parked on the grass. The use of commercial car wash facilities is allowed any day.

**Use of fountains, waterfalls, or other aesthetic water features** – outdoors or indoors – is prohibited, unless recycled or reclaimed water is being used.

**Water may be served in restaurants only on request.** (This is actually a year-round rule designed to save water otherwise used for dishwashing water glasses.)

But perhaps the most dramatic – and most effective – provision of Stage One restrictions is still the mandatory one-day-per-week landscape watering schedule. Watering with a sprinkler or irrigation system is allowed only before 10 a.m. or after 8 p.m. on assigned days, as determined by the last number of your street address.



*At restaurants, water should be served only on request.*

### Drinking, bathing, cleaning, cooking....



Many people take water for granted. But every day, families risk losing water service because they can't afford to pay their water bill. If you'd like to help keep water flowing to our neighbors in need, you can contribute to Project Agua, a non-profit program from SAWS helping customers pay their water bill. It's simple and no contribution is too small to help. Just look for the donation box on the return portion of your SAWS bill.

Water News is published for customers of San Antonio Water System.

#### Numbers to Know

|                          |          |
|--------------------------|----------|
| Customer Service         | 704-SAWS |
| T.D.D.                   | 233-3153 |
| CleanStream Hotline      | 212-5326 |
| <b>24-Hour Emergency</b> |          |
| Customer Service/        |          |
| Water Waste Reporting    | 704-SAWS |

Visit our web site at [www.saws.org](http://www.saws.org)