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IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Water Use Restriction

Easthampton, MA - The Commonwealth of Massachusetts has issued a “Level 3-Critical Drought” for the Connecticut river valley region. Due to this, the city is required to implement a water use restriction for users of the Easthampton Public Water Supply.

Following lower than normal rainfall for the past six months, with the month of July experiencing minimal precipitation and high temperatures, Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA) Secretary Bethany Card today announced that conditions have deteriorated across the state with the drought expanding south and westward. She has declared the Connecticut River Valley and Southeast Regions will join the Northeast and Central Regions as a Level 3-Critical Drought.

The drought is impacting the environment in many ways. The Commonwealth is experiencing decreasing levels in some reservoirs, dry streambeds, ponding, and diminished extent of streams in many watersheds leading to lack of flow, increased turbidity, higher water temperature, and increase in growth of plants and algae in the water. Groundwater, which is a slow reacting index, is starting to be impacted in many regions.

As the summer continues and low precipitation couples with high temperatures, it is incredibly important that outdoor watering be limited to essential uses to reduce the strain on local water systems. Drought-like conditions can also be detrimental to delicate habitats and ecosystems, and can directly impact outdoor recreational opportunities.

- Level 3 – Critical Drought areas ban on all non-essential outdoor water use

**Essential uses are defined by MassDEP as uses required: a) for health or safety reasons; b) by regulation; c) for the production of food and fiber; d) for the maintenance of livestock; or e) to meet the core functions of a business. Nonessential uses are those other than essential uses.*

In accordance with these policies we must enact a water ban on all non-essential outdoor water use at this time. Please make sure all automatic lawn sprinklers are turned off and please be mindful of your water consumption. We will post any changes to the ban on the city website.

The City will notify the public when the water restriction is lifted.

Any person found violating this water use restriction may be subject to the fines established Section 12-49 of the City Ordinances.

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