



COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

Town of Southwick

454 COLLEGE HIGHWAY SOUTHWICK, MA 01077

Department of Public Works

Telephone (413) 569-6772 Fax (413) 569-5001

MANDATORY WATER USE RESTRICTIONS **Originally Issued 5/31/2022 - Updated 6/15/2022 & 7/13/2022**

In accordance with Southwick's Water Withdrawal Permit through MassDEP, and pursuant to its authority, the Board of Water Commissioners has declared a State of Water Supply Conservation thereby imposing a mandatory Water Use Restriction on non-essential outdoor water use. By definition, "non-essential" means uses not required for health or safety reasons, by regulation, for production of food or fiber, for maintenance of livestock, or to meet the core function of a business.

Who must comply with the water restriction?

These restrictions apply to all customers of the Southwick Water Department. Any residents who are not on the Town's water system or use outdoor water from alternate resources, such as a private well or lakes, are not subject to these restrictions. However, all Town residents are strongly urged to conserve water by any means possible.

When is non-essential outdoor water use permitted?

Residents are permitted to use non-essential outdoor water one day per week, and only before 9:00 AM and after 5:00 PM. Which day of week depends on the geographic location and the property number. See the attached figure showing the Town's water system broken up into two regions (North and South). The dividing line between regions is Granville Road, Depot Street, and South Longyard Road, all of which run in a general east-west direction. Residents that live on Granville Road, Depot Street, and South Longyard Road shall be considered within the North Region.

The daily schedule of permitted non-essential outdoor water use is as follows:

- Monday – North Region, odd number properties
- Tuesday – North Region, even number properties
- Wednesday – South Region, odd number properties
- Thursday – South Region, even number properties

No non-essential outdoor water use is allowed on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday.

What are examples of non-essential water use (and thus subject to these restrictions)?

- Irrigation of lawns via sprinklers or automatic irrigation systems
- Washing of vehicles, except in a commercial car wash or as necessary for operator safety or to prevent damage and/or maintain performance of agricultural or construction vehicles or equipment
- Washing of exterior building surfaces, parking lots, driveways or sidewalks, except as necessary to apply surface treatments such as paint, preservatives, stucco, pavement or cement

What are examples of water use that is allowed when these restrictions are in place (and thus not subject to these restrictions)?

- Irrigation to establish a new lawn and new plantings during the months of May and September only
- Irrigation of parks and recreational fields by means of automatic sprinklers outside the hours of 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM (early morning or late evening)
- Irrigation of gardens, flowers and ornamental plants by means of a hand-held hose, soaker hose or drip irrigation system
- Irrigation of lawns by means of a hand-held hose only
- Irrigation with harvested and stored stormwater runoff
- For health and safety reasons
- By regulation
- For the production of food and fiber
- For the maintenance of livestock
- To meet the core functions of a business (i.e. irrigation by golf courses as necessary to maintain tees, greens, and limited fairway watering; or irrigation by plant nurseries as necessary to maintain stock or establish new plantings, wash equipment to prevent damage and/or maintain performance, pest management and plant cooling)
- Irrigation of newly planted lawns (seeded or sodded) in the current calendar year for homes or businesses newly constructed in the previous twelve months

Why is there a water restriction?

Per the Town's Water Withdrawal Permit through MassDEP, a limit on non-essential outdoor water use shall be implemented when one of the following conditions are met:

- During May and June, the mean daily stream flow at the USGS gauge #01183500 (Westfield River) falls below 502 cubic feet per second for three consecutive days
- During July, August, and September, the mean daily stream flow at the USGS gauge #01183500 (Westfield River) falls below 174 cubic feet per second for three consecutive days
- The Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EOEEA) declares the Connecticut River Valley Region to be a Level 1 or higher drought condition.

The mean daily stream flow at the Westfield River USGS gauge fell below 502 cubic feet per second on May 25th, 26th, and 27th, thus tripping the permit condition to implement water use restrictions. Further, on June 15th, EOEEA declared the Connecticut River Valley Region to be in a Level 1 drought condition which also trips the permit condition to implement water use restrictions. On July 12th, EOEEA issued a new declaration stating the Connecticut River Valley Region to be in a Level 2 drought condition.

There are no water use restrictions between October and April. The minimum Westfield River flows identified above were established through MassDEP in an effort to protect fish habitat for spring spawning and summer rearing/growth.

When is this restriction in effect?

This restriction is in effect immediately through September 30th, unless stream flow levels in the Westfield River rise above the minimum flow thresholds identified above for seven consecutive days, until EOEEA determines the Connecticut River Valley Region is no longer in drought conditions, or until a time as determined by the Water Commissioners. The Town will issue a separate notification when these Water Use Restrictions are lifted.

How can the Town track and/or determine whether I use outdoor water?

The new water metering system allows the Town to track hourly usage of all meters. Those services whose meters record flow rates consistent with outdoor use during this restriction will be flagged and investigated. Town crews will also be on the look-out for violators during their daily rounds.

What are the penalties of not complying with this restriction?

Per Town of Southwick Bylaw Chapter 178 Section 5, violators can be fined \$50 for the first offense and \$100 for every subsequent offense.

Why does the restriction limit non-essential water use to one day a week, and not allow for more days? Why do some other communities have no water restrictions, or water restrictions that are not as stringent?

Southwick's Water Withdrawal Permit was updated in 2014 through MassDEP. At the time, the conditions to implement water use restrictions were standard requirements written into all permits as they were being updated. That standard continues to be applied into permits currently being updated. The Town's permit does allow for outdoor water use two times per week, but only if the Town's average residential use (measured as residential gallons per capita day – RGPCD) meets MassDEP's performance standard of 65 RGPCD the preceding year. In 2021, Southwick's residential usage was 80 RGPCD, so for 2022 non-essential outdoor water use is limited to one day a week.

MassDEP is continuously reviewing and updating Water Withdrawal Permits throughout the State. It is likely that other communities with no or less stringent restrictions have not had their permit renewed recently. In time, all communities with permitted water withdrawals through MassDEP will be required to have similar restrictions as Southwick as their permits are updated.

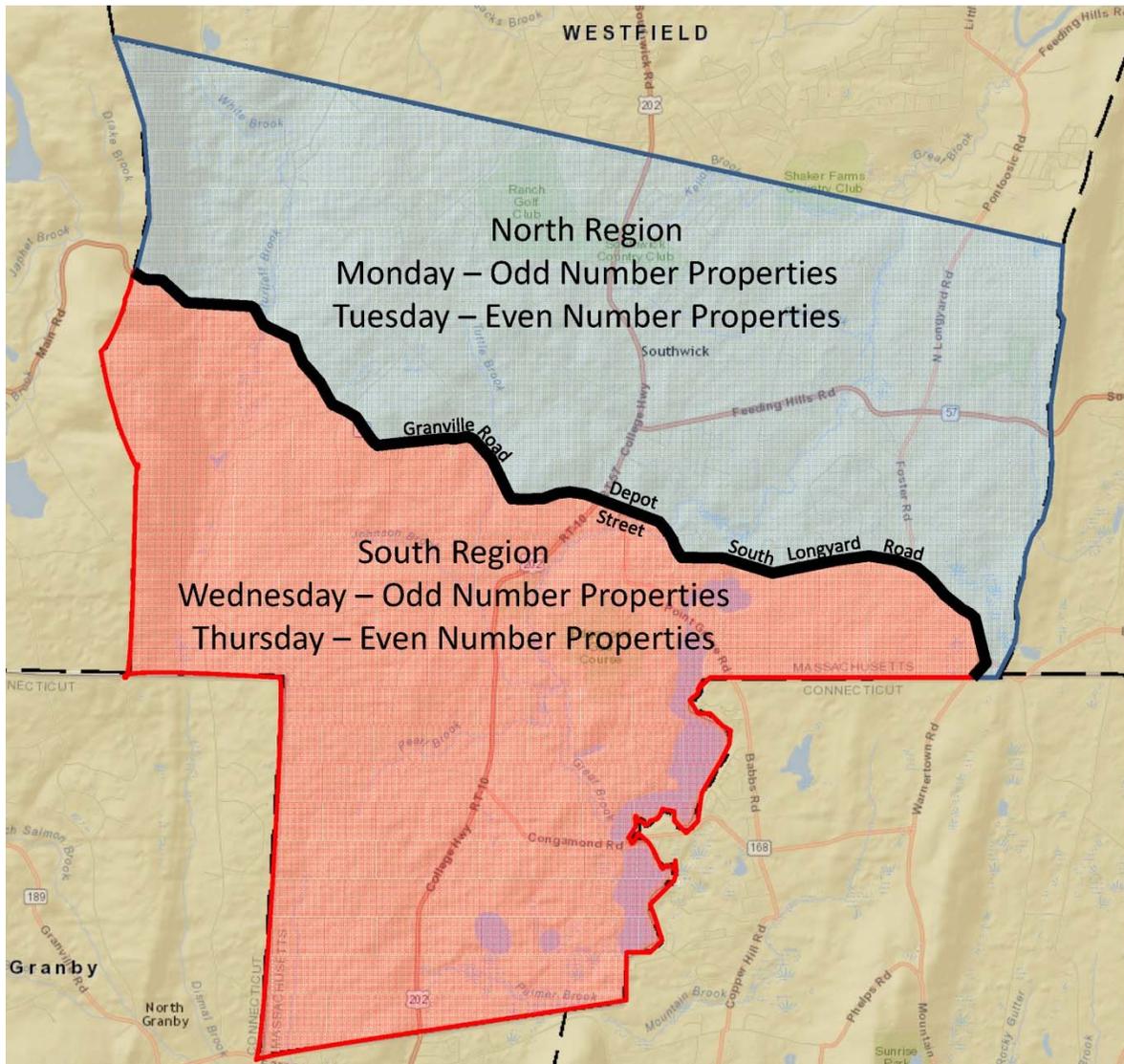
Where can I find a list of all communities in the state with water restrictions in place?

MassDEP maintains a list of all communities with water use restrictions. A link to the website is as follows: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/outdoor-water-use-restrictions-for-cities-towns-and-golf-courses>

If you have any questions, please contact the Department of Public Works at 413-569-6772.

Randal Brown, P.E.
DPW Director

Town of Southwick, MA Figure of Water Use Restrictions



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