

Bryan W. Shaw, Ph.D, P.E., *Chairman*
Toby Baker, *Commissioner*
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Richard A. Hyde, P.E., *Executive Director*



Texas Commission on Environmental Quality

Protecting Texas by Reducing and Preventing Pollution

March 11, 2014

Re: Drought Response for Public Water Systems

Dear Public Water System Official:

As you know, the majority of Texas continues to be affected by persistent drought conditions with no immediate relief in sight. And despite recent rains, there continues to be unprecedented strain on some existing water supplies. The Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) is strongly encouraging public water systems to take all necessary measures to 1) increase conservation efforts and 2) identify and secure alternative water supplies to meet public drinking water needs. Conservation and alternative water supply measures include the following:

- Measure and track closely existing water supplies
- Implement your Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) at appropriate conservation stages to reduce consumption
- Repair leaks in the distribution system
- Implement public education and outreach strategies
- Develop a plan to provide adequate and safe drinking water supplies
- Timely seek authorizations and funding resources to extend existing supply or produce new sources
- Evaluate infrastructure and develop plans to meet needs (*e.g.* extending intake structures to deeper waters, drill new wells, etc.)

Your DCP is an important tool in conserving and managing your water supply during these difficult times. We encourage you to review your DCP and be prepared to implement water use restrictions as appropriate. If your public water system has recently implemented restrictions, review your DCP and be prepared to timely move to the next stage of restrictions.

Public Water Systems are required to notify TCEQ when implementing mandatory provisions of their DCP. The TCEQ has developed an on-line form to facilitate reporting:

<http://www.DroughtReport.org>

This form should also be used for water supply shortage reporting. Please note that effective September 1, 2013, state law requires water utilities to determine available water supply and report to TCEQ when supply is less than 180 days. This assessment should be based on all current sources (*i.e.* surface water, groundwater, and purchased treated water through an interconnection). Additional drought information is available at <http://www.tceq.texas.gov/response/drought>.

If you don't have reliable internet access, need help completing the form, or if you have questions, please call our Small Business and Local Government Assistance hotline at 1.800.447.2827. The collective cooperation of all public water systems is vital to ensuring public drinking water needs can be sustained during this persistent drought.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stephanie Bergeron Perdue". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Stephanie Bergeron Perdue
Deputy Executive Director
Texas Commission on Environmental Quality