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CHAPTER K-ARTICLE XVIII – WATER SHORTAGE RESPONSE PLAN

Section 1 - Purpose

The purpose of this Plan is to provide for the declaration of official phases of water supply shortages and the implementation of voluntary and mandatory water conservation measures throughout the Utility's service and in the event a shortage is declared.

Section 2 - Authority to Implement

When conditions dictate, the Town of Oriental's Public Works Supervisor and the Town Manager under the Direction of the Town's Mayor, may implement a Water Shortage Response Plan (WSRP). As an alternate, the Town Commissioner's liaison to the Water Board may also implement the Water Shortage Response Plan.

Section 3 - Factors Requiring Implementation of the Water Shortage Response Plan

Several parameters or conditions may require the Town of Oriental to begin the WSRP. These include but may not be limited to significant reductions in well water levels, a significant increase in pump run times for the predetermined total flow at the well(s), contaminants in the water system, acts of terrorism, vandalism, main breaks and natural disasters.

If the factors listed above reduce well water levels or pump run times, or by any event or combination of events, prevent the water system from delivering water, WSRP phases will be enacted in the following order:

Phase I – Voluntary Conservation

This phase will be enacted when it is determined that one or more of the parameters outlined in Section 3 is met. If this occurs, the consumers will be notified promptly by any or all of the following: mailers, door hangers, public postings at the Town Hall, Post Offices, Town Website etc. The public will be asked to begin voluntary conservation measures and Class III Non-Essential uses will be halted. Specific conservation measures and tips can be seen on Attachment I.

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Conservation Measures Water Shortage Response Ordinance

Direct Users to adopt the following conservation measures:

INDOOR RESIDENTIAL USE:

Conservation for Voluntary and Mandatory Conservation Phases

- Use dishwashers only when they are full. Washing dishes by hand (don't let the tap run!) saves about 25 gallons.
- Adjust water level on clothes washing machines, if possible. Use full loads only, if not adjustable.
- Turn off faucets while brushing teeth, etc. Saves about 5 gallons per day.
- Reduce water used per flush by installing toilet tank displacement inserts, a plastic jug may often be used as an alternative. DO NOT USE BRICKS – they disintegrate when soaked and the resulting grit hinders closing of the flap valve.
- Do not use the toilet as a trash can.
- Use sink and tub stoppers to avoid wasting water.
- Keep a bottle of chilled water in the refrigerator for drinking.
- Find and fix leaks in faucets and water-using appliances. Faucets can usually be fixed cheaply and quickly by replacing washers.
- Adapt plumbing with flow-restricting or other water saving devices. These are usually inexpensive and easy to install.
- Learn to read your water meter so you can judge how much water you use and what difference conservation makes.
- Take shorter showers and shallow baths. Saves about 25 gallons.
- Reduce the number of toilet flushes per day. Each flush uses about 5 gallons (2-3 if you have water saving toilets).
- Don't use a garbage disposal.
- Use non-phosphate detergent and save laundry water for lawns and plants.

Conservation for Emergency Conservation or Rationing Phase (In addition to measures listed above).

- Turn off shower while soaping up.
- Use disposable eating utensils.

OUTDOOR RESIDENTIAL USE

Conservation for Normal Conditions and Voluntary Conservation Phase

Lawns

- Water before 10:00 am to prevent evaporation which occurs during the hottest part of the day. Morning is better than evening, when the dampness encourages growth of fungus.
- Water only when lawn shows signs of wilt. Grass that springs back when stepped on does not need water.
- Water thoroughly: long enough to soak roots, a light sprinkling evaporates quickly and encourages shallow root systems. Water slowly to avoid runoff.
- Don't let the sprinkler run any longer than necessary. In an hour, 600 gallons can be wasted.
- Allow maximum of one inch of water per week on your lawn. To measure, place cake tins outside to collect rain and water from sprinklers.
- Use pistol-grip nozzles on hoses to avoid waste when watering flowers and shrubs.
- Aerate lawns by punching holes 6 inches apart. This allows water to reach roots rather than run off surfaces.
- Position sprinklers to water the lawn, not the pavement.
- Avoid watering on windy days when the wind not only blows water off target, but also causes excess evaporation.
- Keep sprinkler heads clean to prevent uneven watering.
- Adjust hose to simulate a gentle rain. Sprinklers that produce a fine mist waste water through evaporation.
- Know how to turn off an automatic sprinkler system in case of rain.
- Use an alarm clock or stove timer to remind you to shut off sprinklers that don't have timers.

Vegetables and Flower Gardens

- Water deeply, slowly and weekly. Most vegetables require moisture to a depth of 6 to 8 inches.
- Keep soil loose so water can penetrate easily.
- Keep weeds out to reduce competition for water.
- Put the water where you want it and avoid evaporation by using soil-soakers or slow running hoses, not sprinklers.

Trees and Shrubs

- Water deeply using a soil-soaker or drip-irrigation.
- Water only when needed. Check the depth of soil dryness by digging with a trowel.
- Mulch to reduce evaporation (2" to 3" layer of wood chips, pine needles, grass clippings, or straw keeps the soil cool in the summer).
- Dig troughs around plants to catch and retain water.
- Water trees growing in full sun more often than those in shade.
- Do not use sprinklers. Apply water directly at base.
- Do not fertilize during the summer. Fertilizing increases a plant's need for water.
- Postpone planting until fall or spring when there is generally less need for water.
- Install trickle-drip irrigation systems close to the roots of your plants. By dripping water slowly, the system doesn't spray water in to the air. Use soil probes for large trees.
- Water when cloudy, at night, or even when a light rain is falling.

OUTDOOR RESIDENTIAL USE

Conservation for Voluntary Conservation Phase (in addition to measures listed above)

- Do not allow children to play with hose or sprinklers.
- Limit car washing.
- Be ready to catch rainfall that occurs. Place containers under drain sprouts.
- Use leftover household water if available.
- Consider delaying the seeding or sodding of new lawns.
- Determine the amount of water being used outdoors by comparing water bills for summer and winter.