

LCRA Drought Contingency Plan for Firm Water Customers Update

Water Operations Committee Meeting
Feb. 21, 2024



LCRA Drought Contingency Plan for Firm Water Customers

- **Required to update every five years and submit to Texas Commission on Environmental Quality**
- **The plan requires customers to reduce water use as lakes Travis and Buchanan combined storage reaches defined levels**
- **Customers submit updated drought contingency plans every five years to TCEQ**
- **At minimum, customer drought contingency plans must be as protective as LCRA Drought Contingency Plan for Firm Water Customers**
- **LCRA provides an optional drought contingency plan template to assist customers in developing their plans**

Proposed Drought Contingency Plan

- **What's new?**

- Mandatory drought response begins at 1.1 million acre-feet rather than at 900,000 acre-feet
- Inflows trigger applied on March 1 and July 1 for Stage 2 to initiate water use reductions sooner in very dry conditions
- New drought contingency plan stage added between 900,000 acre-feet and 600,000 acre-feet
- Minimum measures at each stage to promote consistency across the region (e.g., maximum once-per-week watering schedule)

Messaging Outside of Defined Drought Contingency Plan Stages

- **Conservation stage**

- Requires permanent watering schedule of no more than twice per week
- LCRA drought messaging begins at 1.4 million acre-feet combined storage

Proposed Drought Contingency Plan Stages

- **Stage 1**
 - Combined storage below 1.1 million acre-feet and interruptible stored water for non-Garwood operations is curtailed
 - Customers to implement mandatory measures with a water use reduction goal of 10%
 - Increase drought messaging
 - Criteria for exiting Stage 1 is 1.2 million acre-feet combined storage

Proposed Drought Contingency Plan Stages (Continued)

- **Stage 2**
 - Combined storage below 900,000 acre-feet and interruptible stored water for non-Garwood operations is curtailed **OR**
 - Inflow trigger: Combined storage below 1.1 million acre-feet and preceding three-month average inflows are below 25th percentile on March 1 or July 1
 - Customers to implement mandatory measures with a water use reduction goal of 20%
 - Customers to implement maximum once-per-week watering schedule
 - Criteria for exiting Stage 2 is 1.1 million acre-feet combined storage

Proposed Drought Contingency Plan Stages (Continued)

- **Stage 3**

- Combined storage below 750,000 acre-feet
- Customers to implement mandatory measures with a water use reduction goal of 25%
- Customers continue implementing maximum once-per-week watering with no more than six hours per week of automatic irrigation
- Criteria for exiting Stage 3 is 825,000 acre-feet combined storage

Proposed Drought Contingency Plan Stages (Continued)

- **Stage 4**
 - Combined storage below 600,000 acre-feet
 - LCRA Board declares “Drought Worse Than Drought of Record”
 - All interruptible stored water is cut off
 - Water use reduction goal of 30%
 - 20% mandatory pro rata curtailment for firm customers
 - Customers to prohibit irrigation of ornamental turf; customers may allow handheld hose watering of foundations, trees and vegetable gardens
 - LCRA Board sets criteria to exit Stage 4, or increase mandatory pro rata curtailment percentage if conditions worsen

Drought Contingency Plan Update Schedule

- **November 2023 – Firm customer meeting**
- **January 2024 – Board Water Operations Committee presentation**
- **February 2024 – Post proposed plan for public comment**
- **March 2024 – Present plan to LCRA Board for action**
- **April 2024 – LCRA customers incorporate changes to their drought contingency plans**
- **May 1, 2024 – LCRA submits plan to TCEQ**



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