



Mayor Maxton's Message
June 2022

Drought Contingency in Fair Oaks Ranch

Fair Oaks Ranch, like all other areas around us, is experiencing a very dry and hot start to summer. We just had the hottest May on record and possibly could be heading for the same in June. No doubt, we are in a severe drought area.

With the high temperatures and little to no rain, we have started the summer in a challenging situation. From the weather forecast, it doesn't appear that there is any substantial relief in the foreseeable future. The toughest part is that we have not even reached July and August yet, which are typically the hottest and driest months of the year.

On June 15, 2022, the City of Fair Oaks Ranch put into effect Stage 2 of our Drought Contingency Plan. Stage 2 measures state:

1. Reduce the use of all nonessential water.
2. Existing landscaping permits have been rescinded and No new landscaping permits will be issued.
3. No ornamental water fountain usage
4. Surcharges for water consumption over 18,000 gallons per month
 - a. Billing of surcharges will begin on July 1, 2022)

Currently, we are experiencing a drop in the water levels of our City's monitoring wells, but for now, there is water available. Additionally, the City increased its allocation that we are receiving through GBRA for water coming out of Canyon Lake. Without knowing the future, we need to plan for the current weather to continue for the next couple months to ensure that we have water for our residents and for emergency situations.

The driving force behind going into Stage 2 of our Drought Contingency Plan is the significant increase in water consumption that we are seeing throughout the City. I know that it has been hot and dry for almost 60 days now and the landscaping, primarily grass, is being hit hard due to the heat. I fully understand the urge to protect your landscaping, but I believe we are seeing an increase in consumption due to an increase in excessive watering of yards.

The City is asking all residents to adhere to the City's ordinance regarding year-round watering schedule to help conserve our water supply. In compliance with the ordinance, residents are limited to only watering their landscaping with hose-end sprinklers, soaker hoses or sprinkler systems once a week and to only water on your designated day of the week during the designated hours.

If your street address ends in:

- 0 or 1, you can only water your yard on Mondays
- 2 or 3, you can only water your yard on Tuesdays
- 4 or 5, you can only water your yard on Wednesdays
- 6 or 7, you can only water your yard on Thursdays
- 8 or 9, you can only water your yard on Fridays

Watering of yards should only be conducted on your designated date between the hours of midnight to 10:00 am or 8:00 pm to midnight. Additionally, there should be no watering of yards on Saturday or Sunday. Hand watering or holding the hose to water shrubs, trees and even grass is currently authorized at any time.

Currently, we are not in an emergency situation, and by taking positive measures now, we will delay and possibly prevent ever getting to that state. Some ways you can help during this time is to stop power washing of driveways, sidewalks, and curbs. Additionally, any activity that creates excess water runoff into yards or streets is wasting our precious resource, please let's find ways to preserve it.

I am asking all residents to find ways to conserve your water usage. Please help get this message out in a friendly way to all our neighbors. This is the time we need to pull together as a community to make it through this challenging time. By adhering to the landscape watering ordinance, I believe we can reduce the significant increase in consumption that we have seen over the past 30 days.

Recently, the increase in consumption the City experienced stressed our water utility system to the point that two of our water supply tanks were not able to refill fast enough. As a result, over a weeks period, they came close to a point where they would not be able to provide the needed pressure in our water system.

If consumption continues at a rate which will negatively impact the pressure in our City's water utility system, we will be forced to implement Stage 3 Drought Contingency measures. Under Stage 3, ALL non-essential water usage is restricted. Which means, there is no landscape watering through sprinklers or automatic irrigation systems, new landscaping is not allowed, and construction of swimming pools will also become prohibited. We do not want to get to this level, so please help today by doing the right thing and abide by the current ordinance.

I have had several questions related to the different Drought Contingency Plans for other entities and cities around our area. An example question is, "Why are Cow Creek Ground Water District and SAWS already in Stage 3, but we are only in Stage 2?" This is a good question. What I have found is that there is no set standard requirements for Staging across the different entities. The requirements for implementing a Drought Contingency Stage in the Cow Creek Water District or SAWS is not the same as the staging we have here in Fair Oaks Ranch. Each entity develops its own staging requirements based on the operations of its own utility. The areas that impact our availability and usage of water are different than those of other cities or water districts; therefore, our staging requirements were established to meet the needs of providing a safe and effective water utility here in Fair Oaks Ranch.

In addition to establishing our own staging levels, we are tied to the staging of GBRA, since we receive about 40% of our water from them. If GBRA were to increase its Drought Contingency Plan to Stage 3, we would also be required to increase our level to Stage 3

This article is intended to accomplish several things. First is education. I want to make our residents aware of the current requirements that they may not be aware of. Secondly, I want you to know that

we are experiencing some challenges with our water utility due to increased consumption. Thirdly, I want your support to abide by the requirements. By upholding the current requirements, we can cut down our consumption of water and hold off going into Stage 3. Lastly, we are in a severe drought, and I don't know what the future will bring us. It is possible we could get a lot of rain over the next couple months, but today that is not what I would predict for our immediate future so please do your part to help us get through this summer.