



## **LEVEL 3 Watering Restriction Frequently Asked Questions**

As a result of continued heavy water consumption, the MVD has implemented a ban on all outside water use effective immediately. Due to extremely high usage during the stay at home order and the loss of two wells during construction of the PFAS treatment plant, the outside water ban will be in effect until further notice.

The following are answers to the most frequently asked questions. For additional information, please visit our website at [www.mvdwater.org](http://www.mvdwater.org), follow us on [Facebook](#), and [subscribe](#) to receive email notifications.

**Q: Why do you restrict the usage, is there a shortage...?**

**A:** Watering restrictions allow water withdrawal from the aquifer in a controlled manner which helps protect against seasonal fluctuations and aids in maintaining sufficient supply. This year the combined usage for May and June averaged 4.1 million gallons per day. This is a substantial increase compared to the average of 2.5 million gallons per day in May and June of 2019. In addition to the substantially higher average usage, MVD Wells 4 & 5 have been offline since 2016 and won't return to service until the construction of the PFAS treatment plant is complete.

Per the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NH DES) Drinking Water and Groundwater Bureau (DWGB), MVD's wells are permitted to withdraw a maximum specified quantity of water from the ground per minute. Additionally, the storage tanks cannot fill up faster than the combined maximum permissible production rate of all producing wells combined; meaning there is only so much water we are permitted to produce at a time. Therefore, the tanks need to replenish overnight to be ready to meet the demands of peak usage.

In addition to the restriction for groundwater withdrawal, MVD is required to maintain a certain level of water in the tanks to maintain pressure for potential use by the Town of Merrimack's Fire Department.

So, the ultimate purpose of MVD's watering restrictions are to assist in managing the water distribution system to ensure we comply with the NHDES DWGB rules and regulations, meet the Merrimack Fire Department requirements, as well as maintain adequate supply for residential and commercial usage. To make certain this is achieved, MVD staff adjusts production rates to match demand and continuously monitors the water distribution system, the weather conditions & forecasts to determine if additional watering restrictions are necessary.

**Q: Why does MVD not connect to Pennichuck Water Works (PWW) or Manchester Water Works (MWW)?**

**A:** MVD does have a booster pump interconnection to PWW in Nashua for emergency use. In emergency situations or times of high demand, MVD has the ability to supplement the water supply with use of the existing interconnection with PWW. MVD recently purchased water from PWW at an average of 713,751 gallons per day (gpd). However, PWW requested that MVD limit use of the interconnection as a result of a restriction in their system to ensure they are able to meet their own demand.

MWW uses Chloramines for disinfection while MVD uses standard Chlorine disinfection. These two disinfection compounds neutralize each other, potentially leaving the system without enough disinfectant to be effective. Additionally, connecting to MWW would require MVD to shut off a portion of the distribution system which means there would be no benefit to connecting. MVD has used Manchester Water Works (MWW) in the past for a temporary situation only.

**Q: Why is MVD not tapping in the Merrimack River? Why not built a surface water treatment plant and abandon the wells?**

**A:** The groundwater that comes from the wells is generally less expensive to produce per gallon. A surface water treatment plant would cost in the range of \$50M and there would still be a need to treat for contaminants.

**Q: What is a Level 3 watering restriction?**

**A:** A Level 3 watering restriction is a ban on all outside water use. All outside water use includes, but is not limited to, the watering of lawns, washing of cars, filling of pools, etc. Kiddie pools and the use of watering cans for gardens **are** acceptable.

**Q: Are there exceptions to the restriction of outside water use?**

**A:** Yes. Kiddie pools and the use of watering cans for gardens **are** acceptable. Additionally, on June 22, 2020 the MVD Board of Commissioners voted to allow the pressure washing of structures and the washing of vehicles while using an automatic shut-off mechanism on the water supply. In doing so, residents must abide by the odd/even watering restrictions, while businesses may continue as usual.

**Q: Can we turn on the sprinkler for our kids to play in?**

**A:** Unfortunately, the answer is no. Please understand we are not trying to hinder kids having fun in the hot summer weather, but if we were to permit sprinkler use for those with kids we would also have to permit it for those who do not have kids, which would defeat the purpose of the watering restrictions.

**Q: What happens if I just choose to water my lawn?**

**A:** Please be advised - MVD's watering restrictions are strictly enforced. MVD's field staff monitors and tracks service locations. The first violation will result in a warning letter. Further violations will result in fees, and if violations persist MVD will terminate the water service. (Refer to [MVD By-Law 2.J.](#))

**Q: When does the Level 3 water restriction end?**

**A:** The Level 3 water restriction will be in effect until further notice. There is no prediction as to when this prohibition of outside water use will be lifted.

**Q: How do I know if watering restrictions change?**

**A:** Notifications are posted on our website at [www.mvdwater.org](http://www.mvdwater.org) as well as our [Facebook](#) page, and emails are sent to those who have [subscribed](#) to receive notices.

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