



2021 Drought Preparedness

Week 14 – June 21, 2021

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

As the drought has become more intense and water supply concerns deepen, many people have been asking us questions, so we thought we would do a little Q&A:

1. Q: I have been asked to use 55 gallons per person per day at our home. Are the farmers conserving water too? Why do I still see them irrigating?

A: Yes, farmers in the Russian River watershed have been conserving water. Agricultural customers have had their water delivery contracts drastically reduced this year, varying according to water providers. Please note that many farmers have other sources of water to use for irrigation, including groundwater wells and ponds.

2. Q: We are in a drought. Why is it still legal for people to water their lawns?

A: Every water supplier in our area has access to different sources of water and in different quantities. For that reason, not every water customer has been asked to conserve to the same degree. However, in a drought such as the current one, even groundwater sources can be impacted by excessive use.

3. Q: My friend in another county got a rebate to convert her toilet to a more water conserving model. Can I do that?

A: The funds for your friend's rebate were probably secured from grants before the drought. Obtaining such funds takes time and now, rebates for new toilets and lawn conversion are not available locally. If that situation changes, we will let you know!

4. Q: I'm not watering my lawn and it has turned brown. I want my neighbors to know I am conserving water, and not being negligent. What can I do?

A: A small number of professionally produced lawn signs will be available soon that says "Drought Is Here, Save Water." If you live in Calpella, Hopland, Redwood Valley, Talmage, or Ukiah, and would like a sign, let us know and we will put you on the list. However, there will not be enough for everyone. You can always make your own with the same message or get creative. Here are a couple more options for a front yard sign:

Survive
not
Thrive

Brown Lawn
for a
Green Garden

5. Q: Is it true that cannabis farmers are taking all the water?

A: Legal cannabis farmers are under the same water restrictions as all other ag producers. The State Water Resources Control Board, County of Mendocino, law enforcement, and legislative representatives are aware of potential increases in water theft this year, and are taking steps to secure all water sources from illegal use.

6. Q: Will Lake Mendocino go completely dry?

A: The Sonoma County Water Agency and Army Corps of Engineers are closely monitoring Lake Mendocino and water demand, intending to keep 20,000 acre-feet in storage on October 1. We think it is unlikely that Lake Mendocino will go dry in 2021.

If you have additional questions, or want to share a creative way to conserve water, please send an email to: drought@mcrccd.org

For all previous weekly messages, go to:

<https://mcrccd.org/resources/drought-water-conservation-resources>