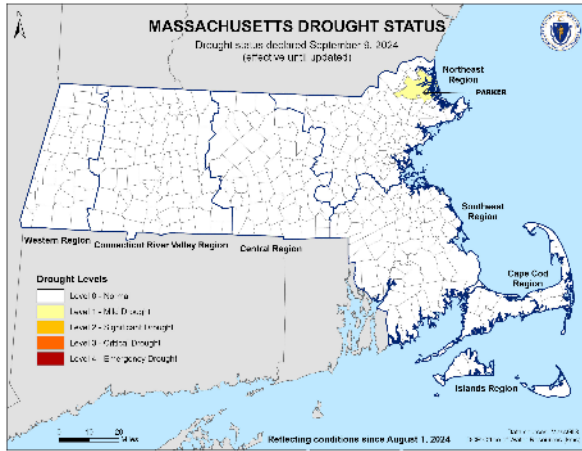




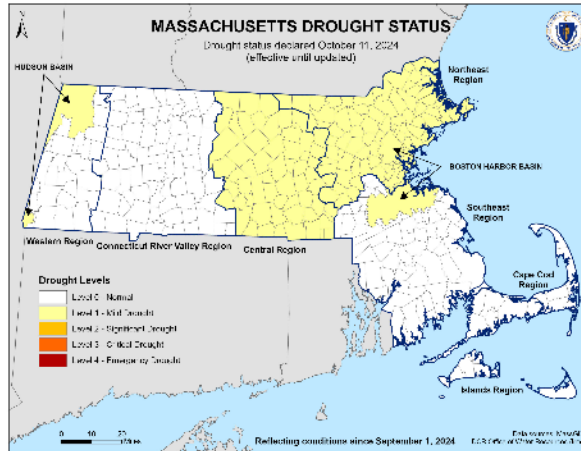
# Drought Response and Communication

**Water Resources Commission**

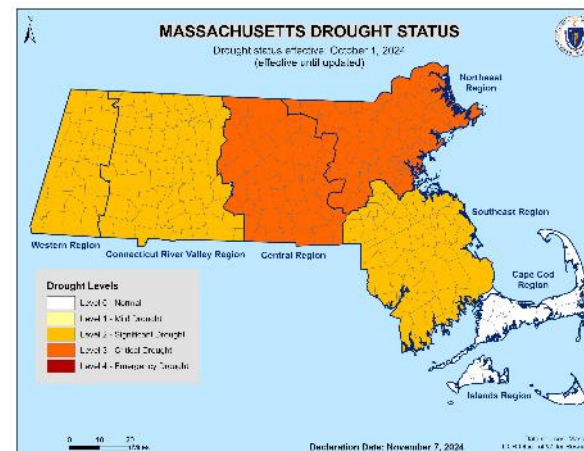
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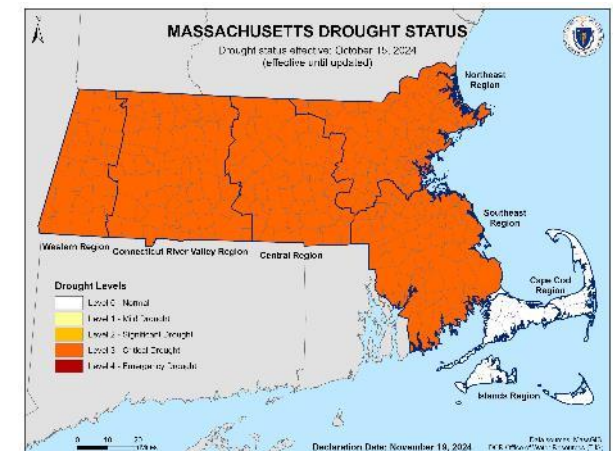
Effective: August 1



Effective: September 1



Effective: October 1

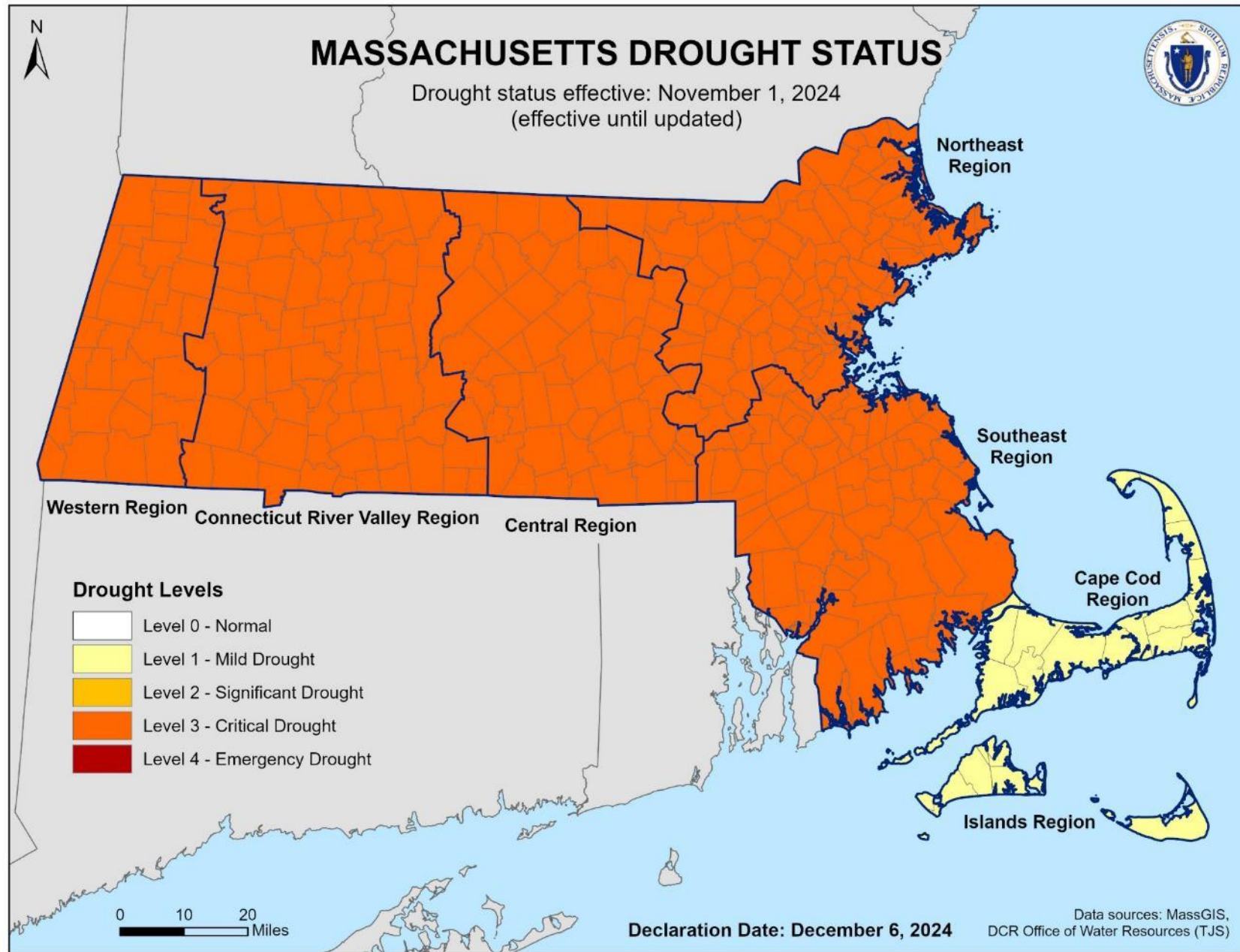


Effective: October 15

# 2024 Drought Progression

Starting August 1

# Current Drought Status





# Drought Actions & Response

## Interagency Coordination

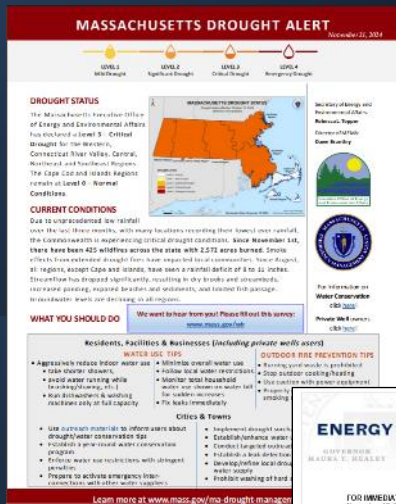
- **EEA:** Coordinating inter-agency responses through Drought Mission Group; managing outreach to stakeholders and the public; regular communication with Governor.
- **MEMA:** Working with EEA on the coordination and outreach. Responding to community requests for assistance.
- **DCR:** Coordinating Fire Response; looking into operations and water use.
- **DEP:** Regular communication with water suppliers; collecting information about wetland resource impacts.
- **DPH:** Reaching out to Boards of Health; communicating about smoke impacts.
- **DFG:** Staff is out in the field and providing local information on impacts to streams, fishery resources, and habitats.
- **DAR:** Coordinating with farmers (livestock) to assess any impacts.



# Drought Actions & Response

## Communication & Outreach

- **Website:** EEA Drought Website updated regularly with data, drought status, and water conservation information;
- **Social Media:** EEA and agency drought posts on Instagram, X, Facebook, LinkedIn
- **Drought Alert:** Published after each drought task force meeting at Level 2 or greater drought level
- **Press & News Stations:** EEA responding to media questions and interviews in a timely manner.
  - Main focus now is urging public to use less water and completely put out outdoor fires.
  - We need to ensure enough water volume and pressure in the water supply systems for fire protection.



# Drought Actions & Response

## Stakeholder Calls

- **Municipalities:** November 22, 2024
- **Public Water Suppliers:** November 26, 2024
- **Local Boards of Health:** December 3, 2024
- **Conservation Commissions:** December 9, 2024
- **Environmental Organizations:** December 9, 2024

On the calls, presentations were made by:  
EEA, MEMA, MassDEP, Asst. Fire Marshall, DCR Fire Chief, DPH



### Massachusetts Drought Related Resources

2024

#### General Drought and Water Conservation Information:

- Massachusetts Drought Management Website: [www.mass.gov/drought](http://www.mass.gov/drought)
- Tips and Resources on Water Conservation on the Massachusetts Water Conservation Toolkit Website: [www.mass.gov/conservemawater](http://www.mass.gov/conservemawater)
- For the Model Water Use Restriction Bylaw: [Model Water Use Restriction Bylaw/Ordinance Update | Mass.gov](#)
- During the Growing Season: The Healthy Lawn, Happy Summer toolkit for educational materials customized to individual households and communities to help reduce summer water use: [Healthy Lawn, Happy Summer Toolkit | Mass.gov](#)

#### Community Resources:

- To access the statewide contract for bottled water, visit: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/gro39/download>
- For implications of drought vis a vis the Wetlands Protection Act and Riverfront Area, go to: <https://www.mass.gov/news/2022-drought-implications-for-riverfront-area>
- During the Growing Season: For details on water restrictions in cities, towns and golf courses, including a map go to: [Outdoor Water Use Restrictions for Cities, Towns, and Golf Courses | Mass.gov](#)

#### Private Wells Resources:

- List of Certified Well Drillers: <https://www.mass.gov/doc/list-of-certified-well-drillers-0/download>
- For General Information about Private Wells: <https://www.mass.gov/private-wells>
- To learn more about Private Wells and Droughts, go to: <https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drought-outreach-and-response#information-for-private-well-owners>

To report on any impacts from the Drought, use the  
Massachusetts Water Impact Reporter: [www.mass.gov/wir](http://www.mass.gov/wir)








# Outreach Products & Resources

# WE ARE IN DROUGHT



## Act Now! Use only what you need

### What does "drought" mean in MA?

-  Rain much below normal for several months
-  Streams and groundwater very low, record low flows in many areas
-  Drought-induced fire potential steadily increasing
-  Potential water supply constraints, risk to fire protection
-  Threats to fish and wildlife



**Water Use:** Minimize overall water use. Make sure toilets, faucets, and shower heads are WaterSense efficient.



**Leaks:** Look for leaks in homes and businesses. Check pipes, fixtures, and appliances. Inspect water meters for constant dial movement. Use dye tabs or food coloring to check for toilet leaks.



**Appliances:** Only do full loads of dishes and laundry. Use dishwashers instead of hand-washing. Limit dish rinsing and garbage disposal use.



**Showering:** Reduce shower length to five minutes and avoid baths. A timer can help!



**Elevated fire risk!** Refrain from outdoor cooking and heating. Do not burn yard waste. Be extra cautious with all flammable materials.



**DROUGHT  
UPDATES**

**MASS.GOV/DROUGHT**





# Outreach Products & Resources

## TIPS FOR SAVING WATER

When in Drought or Not – Please Do Your Part!



### INDOOR WATER USE



1. Choose high-efficiency plumbing products and appliances (look for the WaterSense or Energy Star labels).



2. Turn off water while brushing teeth or shaving: "Never Let the Water Run."



3. Take shorter showers (5 minutes or less) and use water-saving showerheads.



4. Wash only full loads of laundry and dishes.



5. Fix leaks! Dripping faucets and leaking toilets, pipes, and appliances can add up to hundreds of gallons of water lost per week.



6. Create a kitchen compost bin instead of using the garbage disposal.



7. Collect and reuse clean household water (water running while you wait for hot water to reach your faucet or shower; leftover water from cooking, etc.) and use this to water plants.

To check your drought region and status go to:  
[mass.gov/ma-drought-management](https://mass.gov/ma-drought-management)



[mass.gov/conservemaWater](https://mass.gov/conservemaWater)

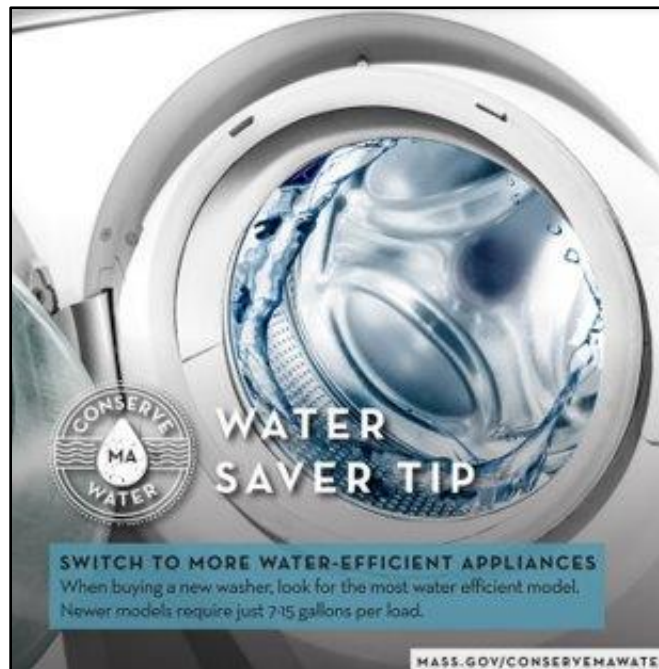




# Outreach Products & Resources

## Topics:


- Car washing
- Faucet aerators
- Efficient appliances
- Don't let water run





# Outreach Products & Resources


Topics:  
Finding and fixing leaks  
Faucet aerators



**CONSERVE MA WATER**

## WATER SAVER TIP

**FIND AND FIX LEAKY FAUCETS AND TOILETS.**  
The average leaky toilet can waste about 200 gallons of water per day. That's over 6,000 gallons a month for just one leaking toilet!



**CONSERVE MA WATER**

## WATER SAVER TIP

**ADD A FAUCET AERATOR**  
Installing simple aerators on bathroom faucets can save 2-16 gallons per day, per faucet. Find them at your local hardware store or online.

[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](http://MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER)



**STEP 1**  
OPEN THE TOILET TANK.

**STEP 2**  
RELEASE DYE TABLET OR 5 DROPS OF FOOD COLORING

**STEP 3**  
WAIT 15-20 MINUTES\* THEN CHECK BOWL FOR SIGNS OF DYE.

**CONSERVE MA WATER**


## WATER SAVER TIP

**FIND AND FIX LEAKY FAUCETS AND TOILETS**  
Leaking toilets can waste thousands of gallons of water per month, and the leaks are often silent and hard to see. Use a dye test if you suspect that your toilet might have a leak.

\*To check for slower leaks, wait overnight.

[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](http://MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER)

# HOW TO FIND A LEAK



**STEP 1**  
Open the toilet tank

**STEP 2**  
Release dye tablet or 5 drops of food coloring.

**STEP 3**  
Don't use the toilet for 15-20\* minutes. Check toilet bowl for any signs of the dye.

**CONSERVE MA WATER**

**IF YOU SEE COLOR, YOU HAVE A LEAK!**

\* To check for slower leaks, wait overnight.

[MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER](http://MASS.GOV/CONSERVEMAWATER)



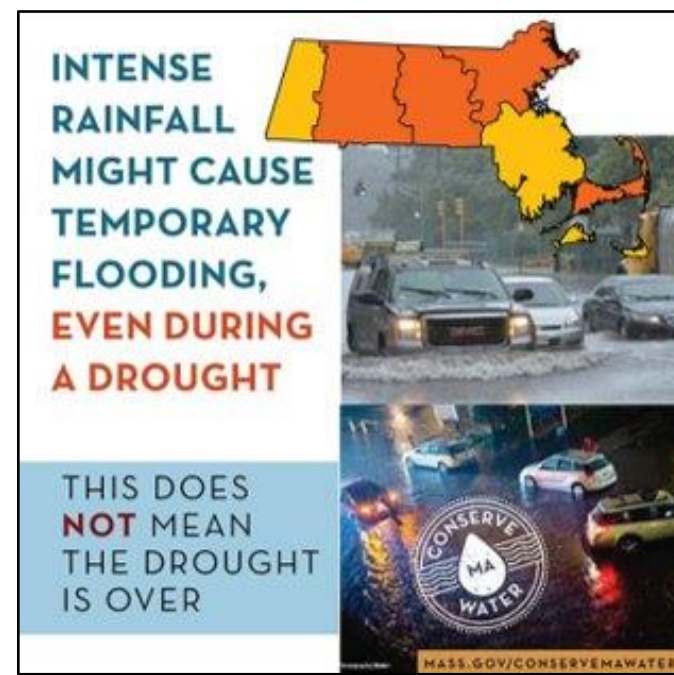
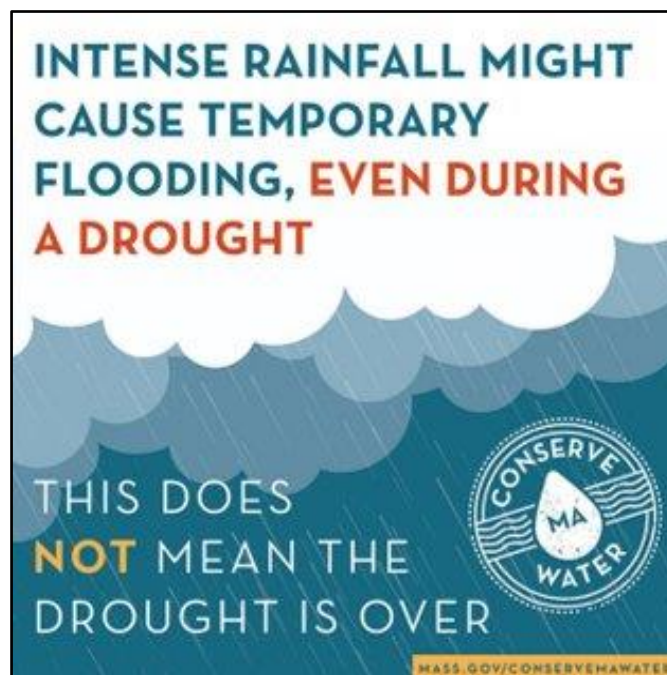
# Outreach Products & Resources

## Topics:

Private wells

Fire danger

Flooding during drought

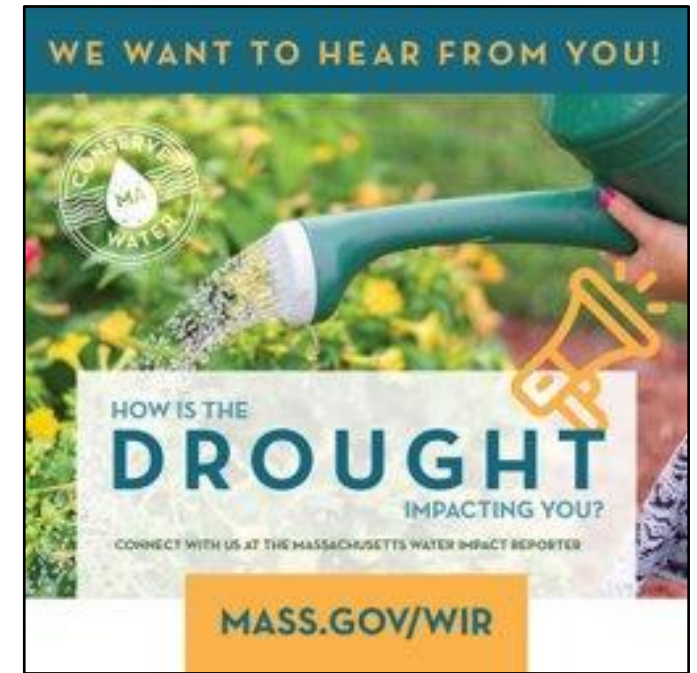
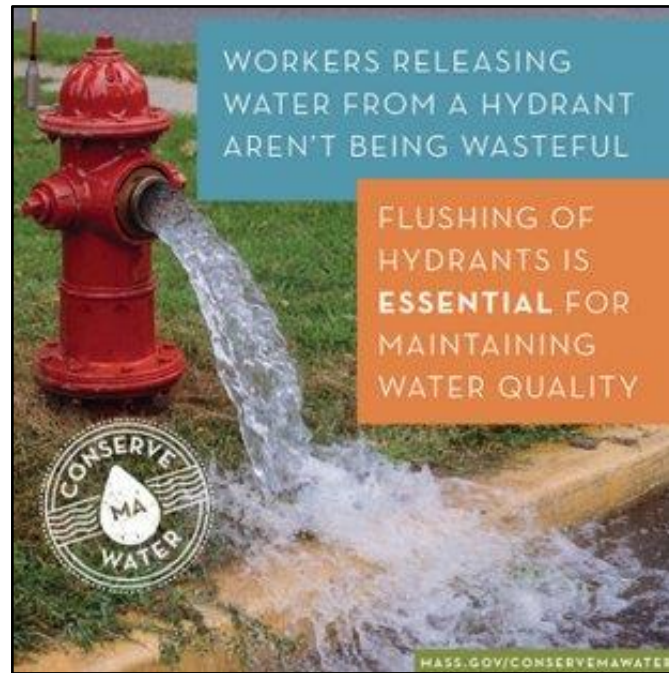




# Outreach Products & Resources

## Topics:

- Hydrant flushing
- Drought impact reporter
- Alternative plant watering





# Outreach Products & Resources

## Finding Leaks

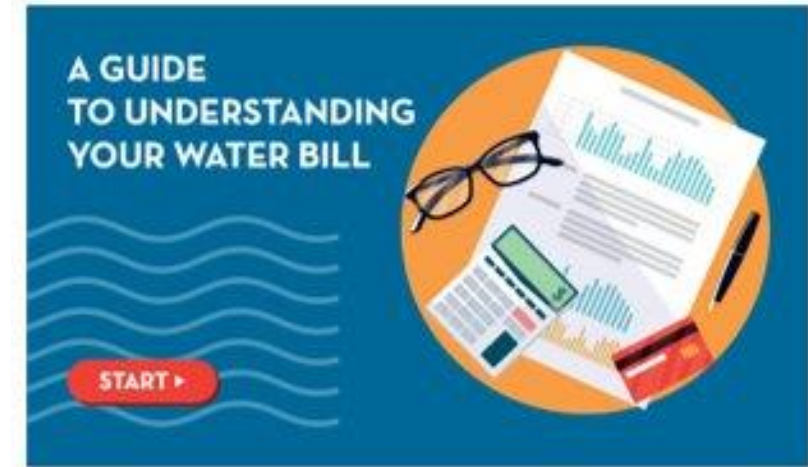


**IN THE BATHROOM**

- TOILETS:** Listen for running water.
- FAUCETS:** Look for drips.
- SHOWERHEADS:** Look for drips when the shower control is turned off. When the shower is running, look for stray sprays. Both can be stopped with plumber's tape.
- IN THE TUB:** Look for drips when the control is turned off.
- UNDER THE SINK:** Check for pooling water under pipes and rust around joints and edges.

[FIX THAT LEAK](#) [GOT IT?](#)

## Guide to understanding water bill



**A GUIDE TO UNDERSTANDING YOUR WATER BILL**

[START >](#)

## Home Water Use Calculator

How much water do you and your family use? Use this water use calculator to find out!



What is your zip code?

[Back](#) [Next Question](#)

1/6 Questions



# Drought Action Recommendations for Residents & Businesses



## Residents and Businesses:

- Aggressively reduce indoor water use by:
  - Reducing shower length and consider using a shower timer
  - Running dishwasher and washing machines only on a full load (avoid handwashing)
  - Not letting water run while brushing and shaving
  - Replacing old fixtures and appliances with water-efficient ones. Make sure toilets, faucets, and showerheads are [WaterSense-labeled](#)
- Follow all local water use restrictions
- Fix any toilet or faucet leaks immediately. Check for leaks in homes and businesses regularly by:
  - Checking water meters for constant dial movement
  - Using dye tabs to check for toilet leaks
  - Conducting regular inspections of all pipes and fixtures, including those located in utility rooms, crawlspaces, and other hidden areas
- No outdoor fires, grills and flammable materials
- Monitor total household water use shown on your water bill for sudden increases, which often indicate leaks. Use the [MA Home Water Use Calculator tool](#) to evaluate household water use.



# Drought Action Recommendations for Communities



## Immediate Steps for Communities:

- Provide timely information on the drought and on water conservation tips to local residents and businesses taking advantage of the state's [library of outreach materials](#)
- Establish local water use restrictions
- Strongly discourage or prohibit washing of hard surfaces (sidewalks, patios, driveways, siding); personal vehicle or boat washing
- Establish or enhance water-use reduction targets for all water users, identify top water users and conduct targeted outreach to help curb their use

## Short- and Medium-Term Steps for Communities:

- Establish a year-round water conservation program that includes public education and communication, taking advantage of the state's [library of outreach materials](#)
- Implement or establish drought surcharge or seasonal water rates
- Prepare to activate emergency inter-connections for water supply
- Develop or refine your local drought management plan using guidance outlined in the state [Drought Management Plan](#)



# Key Resources

- For Current Drought Related Information: Massachusetts Drought Management Website:  
[www.mass.gov/drought](http://www.mass.gov/drought)
- For Drought Tips, Tools, and Resources:  
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/drought-tips-tools-resources>
- For Tips and Resources on Water Conservation: Massachusetts Water Conservation Toolkit Website:  
[www.mass.gov/conservemawater](http://www.mass.gov/conservemawater)
- Information for Private Well Owners:  
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/information-for-private-well-owners-during-a-drought>





# Outreach Products & Resources

## Next Steps

- **New contract** with Shields (graphic design)
  - Revamping “Drought FAQ”
  - Short video on “what you can do” during drought
  - Other ideas?
- **New Grant Program: Drought Resiliency and Water Efficiency**
  - [Notice of Intent Posted](#), full RFR coming soon
- **Local Drought Management Plan Guidance Document: Coming soon!**



