

## Managing Turf-Related Water Use During a Drought Emergency

During a declared drought emergency, certain specific water uses are prohibited. This fact sheet is intended to clarify water use responsibilities under drought emergency conditions. For a complete listing of nonessential water use bans and their exceptions, consult 4 Pa. Code § 119.4, relating to prohibition of nonessential water uses.

### GRASS

Grass, including lawns, may not be watered, with some limited exceptions:

- Grass may be watered if the area is part of a DEP-approved wastewater or stormwater treatment system using spray irrigation.
- Grass may also be watered if the area has been newly seeded or sodded within the previous 12 months, but watering must be done between 5:00 PM and 9:00 AM by means of a bucket, can or hand-held hose equipped with an automatic shutoff nozzle. Newly seeded or sodded grass areas also may be watered between 7:00 PM and 11:00 PM by any means designed and operated to ensure effective water conservation.
- Professional landscapers may water newly seeded or sodded grass areas during regular working hours by any means designed and operated to ensure effective conservation. Professional landscapers and irrigation contractors may test newly installed or repaired irrigation equipment for a period not to exceed 15 minutes per zone.
- Water also may be used to soak grub control products into the ground, but only one time during the period of declared drought emergency.
- Finally, water may be used to revegetate areas following earthmoving, where required by an erosion and sediment control plan, in a manner that ensures effective conservation.

### ATHLETIC FIELDS

Water may be used to irrigate athletic fields beginning two weeks prior to the athletic season. Irrigation is allowed only one night per week between 5:00 PM and 9:00 AM in accordance with an irrigation plan and schedule that has been submitted to the local law enforcement agencies and to the Commonwealth Drought Coordinator.

- If the athletic field is sand-based, irrigation may only take place in accordance with a plan submitted using the [Drought Emergency Application](#) and approved by the Commonwealth Drought Coordinator. For Drought Coordinator information, contact DEP at 717-772-4048 or [droughtinfo@pa.gov](mailto:droughtinfo@pa.gov).
- Athletic fields also may be watered if the field is part of a DEP-approved wastewater or stormwater treatment system using spray irrigation.
- Areas that have been newly seeded or sodded within the previous 12 months may be watered by any means designed and operated to ensure effective water conservation.
- Professional landscapers and irrigation contractors may test newly installed or repaired irrigation equipment on athletic fields for a period not to exceed 15 minutes per zone.
- Water may be applied to athletic field nongrass areas to control dust during an athletic event if dust control is necessary to protect public health and safety.

Grass tennis courts may be watered between 5:00 PM and 9:00 AM by means of a bucket, can, or hand-held hose equipped with an automatic shutoff nozzle or by an irrigation system designed and operated to restrict the timing or total volume of water.

## **GOLF COURSES**

Greens, tees and fairways may be watered only in accordance with a plan submitted using the [Drought Emergency Application](#) and approved by the Commonwealth Drought Coordinator.

- Heat sensitive grass on tees, greens and fairways may be syringed by means of a hand-held hose equipped with an automatic shutoff nozzle between the hours of 10:00 AM and 5:00 PM for a period not to exceed 15 minutes in any one day.
- Professional landscapers and irrigation contractors may test newly installed or repaired irrigation equipment on golf courses for a period not to exceed 15 minutes per zone.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:**

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