

Water Supply Conditions – September 3, 2015

New Jersey continues to dry out although conditions do not pose a direct threat to drinking water supplies at this time. The northern half of the State has been notably drier than the southern half over the past 90 days. The current dry pattern continues a trend that began in mid-Spring of this year but was temporarily interrupted by abundant rainfall that fell in June. While one would typically expect to see water supply indicators; namely, reservoir storage, streamflow and shallow ground water levels, dropping at this time of year, continued warm weather and high water demands could begin to strain water reserves, particularly in northeastern New Jersey.

The values for drought indicators are mixed – some rising and others falling (see <http://www.njdrought.org/status.html> for more). Generally, precipitation is considered within the normal range in the Northeast and Southwest drought regions, and Moderately Dry elsewhere. Streamflow ranges from normal in the Northwest and Coastal South regions, Moderately Dry in the Central, Coastal North, and Southwest regions, and Severely Dry in the Northeast. Unconfined ground water also is extremely varied, from normal in the Coastal South region, to Moderately Dry in the Central, Northeast and Southwest, and Severely Dry in the Coastal North and Northwest regions. In the northern half the State where they are a critical water supply source, combined storage in reservoirs remains just slightly below average, although some systems are being strained more than others.

In developing its suite of water supply indicators, NJDEP determined that cumulative 90-day precipitation, streamflow, and unconfined groundwater levels compared to long-term 90-day averages is the most reliable time period for evaluating water supply conditions. Accordingly, if dry conditions extend through September, the June wet period data will fall out of the analysis and we will see a further decline in hydrologic indicators.

NJDEP water professionals are closely monitoring weather and hydrologic conditions, water use trends, and other relevant information and will consult with water suppliers on an as-needed basis. Although outdoor water use typically should be winding down after the Labor Day holiday, the public should be mindful to use water wisely and efficiently, particularly outdoors for lawn and landscape irrigation and other recreational activities.

Remember – if we don't waste it now, it will be there when WE need it later!

Useful Water Conservation Tips

1. To save water (and money!) in the home, fix leaky faucets and pipes.
2. Do not over-water lawns and landscaping – 2 times per week for 30 minutes (in the cool of the morning or late evening) is enough to keep grass green and thriving.
3. Turn off the faucet while brushing teeth and shaving.
4. Run washing machines and dishwashers only when full.
5. Install high-efficiency, water saving toilets, faucets and showerheads (look for the Water Sense label).

| A complete list of water conservation tips at (www.njdrought.org/ideas.html).