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State Issues 'Draught Advisory' Although Water Utilities, So Far, Haven't Asked for Conservation

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The Connecticut Department of Public Health issued a "Draught Advisory" on Monday, recommending that customers of public water systems "follow any water conservation recommendations that may be requested by their water utility."

As of 4 p.m. Monday, no water conservation recommendation has been posted on the website of Aquarion Water Co., which serves Darien residents. For much of late 2015 and early 2016, the utility was asking residents in Darien and many other communities to conserve water because of dry weather lowering the amount of water in the utility's reservoirs.

In a recent presentation given to the Darien Board of Selectmen, Aquarion officials said outdoor water usage (watering grass, for instance) is much greater than indoor use during warmer weather when lawns are

watered and pools refilled.

Here's the full [news release](#) issued Monday (boldface emphasis added by Darienite.com):

With precipitation across Connecticut down as much as six inches over the last 90 days, the Department of Public Health (DPH) today issued a Drought Advisory. It is recommended that customers of public water systems follow any water conservation recommendations that may be requested by their water utility and that businesses and residents served by private wells follow DPH's water conservation advice.

"I want to emphasize that water levels in Connecticut's larger reservoirs and water systems are perfectly fine at this point. **There are currently no reports of any Community Public Water Systems triggering their emergency contingency plans due to below normal reservoir capacities.** DPH continuously monitors our reservoirs, and we are not in a drought," added Dr. Pino.

"However, we have not experienced as much rain as we typically do to this point in the year. Therefore people should be conscientious about their water consumption so that we don't begin to experience drought conditions later this summer, particularly if rainfall continues to be below average."

"While the state's public water supplies are still fine overall, some of our smaller systems across the state with lower yielding supplies may want to consider requesting water conservation measures from their customers," said DPH Commissioner Dr. Raul Pino. "If drier than usual conditions persist, we may see systems requesting conservation measures to protect their water supply. Accordingly, we are asking all residents to comply with any conservation recommendations issued by your water company and for well water customers to cut back on unnecessary water usage."

The Interagency Drought Advisory Workgroup, comprised of the Commissioners of DPH and the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP), and the Chairman of the Public Utility Regulatory Authority (PURA), monitors and analyzes water-related data to ensure that Connecticut's water supplies remain stable.

At a meeting of the Workgroup earlier today, it was determined that five of seven drought benchmarks had been met, triggering the state's entry into the Drought Advisory Stage.

Those benchmarks include: precipitation, groundwater, streamflow, Palmer Drought Index and fire danger. The remaining two benchmarks, reservoir levels and the Crop Moisture Index, have not been met. Drought Advisories were previously declared in 2002, 2007 and 2010. If conditions continue to decline, a Drought Watch would be issued.

The DPH water conservation fact sheet for businesses and residents on private wells can be accessed by clicking [here](#).

The DPH's "Drought Guidance for Consumers" of public water systems can be accessed by clicking [here](#).