



HCWA Currents



NEWS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION FOR CUSTOMERS OF THE HENRY COUNTY WATER AUTHORITY

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HCWA Customers should anticipate worsening drought

In early September, the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) declared a Level 1 Drought Response for 53 metro Atlanta and North Georgia counties, including Henry. By the end of October, the U.S. Drought Monitor had classified Henry County, Georgia as suffering from Extreme to Exceptional Drought, which are their two worst/driest drought categories.

The reason? From May thru October, metro Atlanta has received 14.82 inches of rainfall, which is nearly 10 inches less than the 30-year average amount of rainfall for this same time of the year.

As a result of the continued drought and these drier than normal weather conditions continuing through this fall, Henry County Water Authority (HCWA) customers are asked to use water wisely, conserve water when possible, and adhere to outdoor watering restrictions in place. **Plus, customers should be aware that as the drought continues, outdoor watering restrictions are subject to change.**

Under the current Level 1 Drought Response

Declaration, HCWA customers can water daily outdoors, except between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

If a Level 2 Drought Response is declared, HCWA customers can water outdoors, except between the hours of 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., according to an odd-even system. Even-numbered addresses may water on Wednesdays and Saturdays, while odd-numbered addresses may water on Thursdays and Sundays.

According to HCWA Deputy Manager Tony Carnell, the Authority is in perhaps the best condition in terms of water supply as any water utility within the Atlanta Region. At the time of the October HCWA Board Meeting, Henry County drinking water reservoirs were 79% full, which equates to 366 days of storage.

Some examples of wise water use include:

• Watering lawns and plants in the early morning

and late evening on permitted days, to prevent evaporation during the hottest times of the day.

• Water in several short sessions rather than in one long session, to reduce runoff and to allow water to infiltrate into the soil and plant roots.

• Check and repair leaks inside and outside of the home.

• Shorten showers and turn off water when shaving or brushing teeth.

• Fill your dish washer and washing machine, assuring there is a full load for every use.

• For more wise water use tips, check out the Metro Water District's website at www.mydropcounts.org.

Check our website at www.hcwa.com for updates on current drought declarations and outdoor watering restrictions, or contact HCWA Customer Service at 770-957-6659.



HCWA hosts "Cubihatcha Kids" for field trips

The HCWA hosted approximately 3,000 third grade students and teachers from Henry County Schools for field trips at its Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Center during a two-week period from Sept. 12–15, and Sept. 26 – 30. This year was the 14th anniversary of field trips for Henry County's "Cubihatcha Kids."

Organizations providing teachers for the outdoor classes included the HCWA and its staff, who provided lessons about the water cycle, tree cookies, as well as the water production and wastewater treatment processes. Retirees and administrators from the Henry County Board of Education led classes on crayfish, watersheds, and physical education. Employees from Central Georgia EMC led a class on solar energy. Georgia 4-H volunteers taught a class on the qualities and characteristics of water. The Georgia Department of Natural Resources offered their expertise for a class on native animal species. The Georgia Forestry Commission taught lessons on Forest Maintenance and Forest Fires, and the Georgia Farm Bureau provided insights on gardening and harvesting, using the Cubihatcha Center's Community Garden.

"I've taken my classes to Cubihatcha for several years, and the field trips are always excellent," says Dr. Sandra Cronin, Third Grade Teacher at Ola Elementary. "The instructors spend a lot of time planning and preparing for hands-on experiences that are difficult to duplicate in the regular classroom. And as a bonus, the view is amazing!"

Check out our photo gallery from the Cubihatcha Kids field trips at www.hcwa.com.



Kostoula Vallianos (far left), with the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, teaches third grade students from Ola Elementary School about stormwater or non-point source pollution and how to protect water resources from its negative impact. The Henry County Water Authority's Long Branch Reservoir in the background provides an ideal setting for such outdoor education.

HCWA offers new payment option

Since August, the HCWA has implemented a new online payment service to make it more convenient for you to pay our bill on time, improving a popular payment option for HCWA customers.

You can register for the new bill pay service via our website at www.hcwa.com. However, you can make one-time payments without having to register. You also can schedule recurring payments with a credit card and pick the day of your payment. However, payments scheduled past their due date are subject to a late penalty and/or interruption of service if customer accounts are delinquent.

Our new online bill pay service keeps your financial information secure thanks to a platform with double encryption. It also features an intuitive simple interface for mobile users, and you can request email notifications of your bill to remind you of due dates.

A small convenience fee will be assessed for payments made by credit or debit card, when customers utilize the new online payment option. The maximum payment allowed per transaction is \$300.00; however, multiple payments may be made on any account.

For more information, contact our customer service department at 770-957-6659.



Holiday Season a time for Charitable Assistance

This Holiday Season may be a time when HCWA customers consider participating in our "round-up" or Charitable Assistance Program (CAP). This fall marks the second anniversary of the program, which has helped a lot of people and made an impact on the community in that short amount of time.



The CAP, which was a program initiated by HCWA District 5 Board Member Carlotta Harrell, provides an avenue for HCWA customers to help fellow qualifying customers, who have experienced financial hardship, with the payment of their monthly water bill.

For those HCWA customers who choose to participate in the program, their monthly water bill is rounded up to the nearest dollar, with that extra money going into a CAP fund for disbursement. Samaritans Together of Henry County, Inc. is partnering with the HCWA to administer the program on the Authority's behalf. Neither the HCWA nor Samaritans Together charge administrative fees for this program, so 100% of the donations go to help HCWA customers in need.

For more information, or to download a registration form, log onto our website at www.hcwa.com.

Second Front

HCWA hosts Georgia Model Water Tower Competition for Henry County Schools

The HCWA, in conjunction with the Georgia Association of Water Professionals (GAWP) and the Georgia Section of the American Water Works Association (GAWWA), hosted the 2016 Georgia Model Water Tower Competition for Henry County Schools on Friday Oct. 28, at its Tussahaw Plant.

The objective of the Georgia Model Water Tower Competition is to provide a friendly, local competition among Henry County Middle School Students who design and build a water tower with specific size and height requirements. The event also offers the students a better understanding of the value of water and the operations of a water utility, while introducing them to career opportunities within the water industry. The competition also engages students in hands-on learning of STEM curricula – science, technology, engineering, and math – which are emphasized by Georgia educators and school administrators.

The student model water towers were judged based

on three criteria – structural efficiency, hydraulic efficiency, and design ingenuity. In addition, participating students completed interviews with a panel of HCWA division managers.

“This is an excellent event, allowing the students to display their creativity during a very good learning experience,” says Austin Road Middle School teacher Chandra Houston. “This competition teaches the students the engineering-design process, which all engineers go through to solve real world problems.”

The Locust Grove Middle School team of Preston Whitfield, Jason Gardner, and Elijah Richards won the overall Georgia Model Water Tower Competition for Henry County Schools, followed by John Mangual in second place and Connor Coleman in third. Jasmine Palacios, last year’s winner, took home the “Most Artistic” award, while the “Best Engineering” Award went to the team of Martin Bong, Jr., Wesley Bell, III, and Kendrick Colvin.

Check out our photo gallery from the Model Water Tower Competition at www.hcwa.com.



The overall winner of the 2016 Georgia Model Water Tower Competition for Henry County Schools was the Locust Grove Middle School Team of (left to right) Elijah Richards, Preston Whitfield, and Jason Gardner. Tony Carnell (left), HCWA Deputy Manager, presented the award to the winners and their teacher Christy Collier.

Don't forget to protect those pipes when winterizing your home

With record warm temperatures extending into the fall this year, it may be hard for HCWA customers to think about winterization tips or weatherizing their homes in anticipation of cold weather in the future. But now is the time for customers to winterize their homes, to prevent potential water leaks or pipe bursts this winter.

Consider the following winterization tips to protect your water lines, exposed pipes, valves, and irrigation systems from freezing.

- * Insulate pipes, either with wraps or tapes, making sure to locate all pipes that pass through unheated spaces or areas exposed to the outdoors.
- * Consider adding or supplementing insulation to

water heaters.

- * Drain irrigation systems, since the tips of sprinkler heads and portions of sprinkler systems often continue to hold water, even when inactive.
- * Disconnect garden hoses from all outdoor water faucets, allowing water to drain completely, and store them in a place with consistent (warmer) temperatures.
- * If a faucet is not frost free, find the shut-off valve where the pipe feeds the faucet outside of the home or building and turn it off, prior to opening the outside faucet until it drains completely.
- * Winterize air conditioning units as well, by draining all air conditioner pipes and hoses.

- * Remove window air conditioning units and insulate those areas accordingly.
- * Clean gutters, so winter rains and melting snow can drain.
- * When leaving the home or office for an extended period of time, turn the temperature down to 55 degrees – rather than turning the heat completely off – to prevent problems from freezing temperatures.
- * Should a pipe burst due to freezing or under any other circumstances, always know how to shut off the main water line servicing the home or office building.

For more information on winterization or related consumer tips, contact the HCWA at 770-957-6659.

Runners “Storm the Watershed” at Cubihatcha

The HCWA and its Cubihatcha Outdoor Education Center, in partnership with the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), the Metropolitan North Georgia Water Planning District, and Garney Construction, hosted the first “Storm the Watershed” trail run on Saturday Oct. 22.

Approximately 100 runners participated in either the 15K or 5K trail runs that included views of the HCWA Long Branch Reservoir and Cubihatcha Center in Locust Grove.

The event was organized to raise awareness of the importance of water stewardship among Georgia communities and utilities, including the protection of natural (water) resources, advocacy for wise water use and water conservation, and long-term management of water supplies and water systems.

Isaac Banks won the men’s 5K race with a time of 22 minutes and 43 seconds. Lauren Langley won the women’s 5K after finishing in 26 minutes and 43 seconds. Kevin Randolph won the men’s 15K race with a time of 1 hour, 13 minutes and 53 seconds, while Leslie Caceda won the women’s 15K by finishing in 1 hour, 27 minutes and 52 seconds.

Complete race results are online at www.stormthewatershed.com.



Approximately 100 runners enjoyed views of the HCWA Long Branch Reservoir and Cubihatcha Center during the first annual “Storm the Watershed” trail run.



Fishing Season Extends Through Winter

Winter Fishing Dates:

Dec. 16-17, 2016

Jan. 17-19, 2017

Feb. 10-12, 2017

The HCWA is wrapping up another successful year of public fishing, as Wednesday Nov. 30th marks the final day of the 2016 regular fishing season. However, the Tussahaw Reservoir will remain open for the seventh consecutive year on a limited basis during the winter.

The HCWA winter fishing dates are Dec. 16-17, 2016; Jan. 17-19, 2017, and Feb. 10-12, 2017. The 2017 regular fishing season and full fishing schedule resumes again March 1. During these select weekends, the reservoir is open to anglers from 7:00 a.m. to approximately 5:00 p.m. The Tussahaw welcomes canoeing and kayaking as well.

To enjoy fishing or recreation on the Tussahaw Reservoir, HCWA customers, residents, or property owners must have a

reservoir use permit, available for \$45 at the Authority headquarters. Permits are valid for one calendar from the date of purchase.

For more information on HCWA fishing or outdoor recreation, citizens can log onto our website at www.hcwa.com, or contact the HCWA Cubihatcha Center staff at 678-583-3930.



Fishing on the Tussahaw is available to HCWA reservoir use permit holders on a limited basis during the winter months, until the start of the 2017 regular fishing season on March 1.

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