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PUBLIC NOTICE

Updated Nonessential Outdoor Water Use Restrictions 7/29/2026

The Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection has mandated that the Town of Southampton enact water use restrictions for all customers of the public water supply. These measures are necessary to maintain a sustainable water supply and safeguard stream flow for aquatic ecosystems, primarily by limiting non-essential outdoor water consumption.

Despite the heavy rains, flow conditions at the USGS Stream Gauge in the Mill River that are tied directly to our water withdrawal permit have hit “streamflow-triggered Restrictions”. (The stream flow gauge has dropped to below 10 CFS for 3 days). These new restrictions will remain in effect until the stream gauge remains above 10 CFS for 7 consecutive days.

Effective immediately, all nonessential outdoor water use is prohibited. Certain water uses are now limited to 2 days per week before 9:00 AM or after 5:00 PM. Exemptions to these restrictions include food production and livestock watering.

Nonessential Outdoor Water Use means a use that is not required:

1. For health or safety reasons, including public facilities used for cooling such as splash pads and swimming pools, and for washing of boats, engines, or marine equipment to prevent negative saltwater impacts or the transfer of invasive aquatic species;
2. By permit, license, statute, or regulation;
3. For the production of food, including vegetable gardens, and fiber;
4. For the maintenance of livestock;

5. To meet the core functions (those functions essential to the commercial operations) of a business, including but not limited to:
 1. Plant nurseries as necessary to maintain stock;
 2. Golf courses as necessary to maintain greens and tees, and limited fairway watering per 310 CMR 36.07(2)(c)2.a through c.;
 3. Venues used for weddings or similar special events that limit watering to hand-held hose or drip irrigation as necessary to maintain gardens, flowers and ornamental plants;
 4. Professional washing of exterior building services, parking lots, driveways and/or sidewalks as necessary to apply surface treatments such as paint, preservatives, stucco, pavement, or cement in the course of construction, reconstruction or renovation work;
6. For irrigation of public parks before 9:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m.;
7. For irrigation of public and private recreation fields, including those operated by schools, colleges, universities and athletic associations, before 9:00 a.m. and after 5:00 p.m.;
8. For irrigation of publicly funded shade trees and trees in the public right-of-way;
or
9. To establish a new lawn as necessary to stabilize soil in response to new construction or following the repair or replacement of a Title 5 system.

Any person found violating this water use restriction may be subject to the fines established, Chapter 259 and 259-9 Water bylaws of the Town of Southampton.

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