



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Lehigh County Elevated to a Drought Warning by PA DEP LCA Asks Customers to Voluntarily Reduce Water Use by 10-15%

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Allentown, Pa. — In an announcement on February 19, the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) elevated its drought declaration for Lehigh County to a drought warning. Due to ongoing dry conditions and below-average rainfall across the region, Lehigh County Authority (LCA) is asking water customers to voluntarily reduce their water use by **10-15%**.

LCA regularly monitors groundwater levels, stream flows, and overall supply conditions across multiple water sources. Current levels are significantly below normal for this time of year due to persistent dry weather patterns that have slowed the natural recharge of aquifers and reduced flows in several local watersheds.

LCA draws approximately 27 million gallons of water per day from a combination of sources, including the Little Lehigh Creek, the Lehigh River, two natural springs, and groundwater wells throughout the service area. A system-wide reduction of 15% would conserve nearly 4 million gallons of water per day.

“Our system remains stable, but we need to act now to preserve our water supply as the drought continues,” said Liesel Gross, LCA’s Chief Executive Officer. “This winter’s snowfall alone won’t resolve the drought conditions brought on by two years of below-average rainfall. Without consistent precipitation that replenishes streams and aquifers, we remain in a deficit. Voluntary conservation now is the responsible way to protect water resources for the entire community.”

LCA’s drought monitoring data spans several decades. While current conditions are serious, they are not yet as severe as 2002, when Lehigh County last faced a formal Drought Emergency declaration. However, sustained conservation is essential to prevent further decline.

The DEP drought warning declaration applies to all of Lehigh County — not just LCA customers. All residents and businesses are encouraged to conserve water.

LCA tips to conserve water include:

- Finding and fixing leaks, like dripping faucets, running toilets, and sprinklers
- Running dishwashers and washing machines only with full loads
- Taking short showers instead of filling the bathtub
- Turning off the tap while brushing teeth
- Using a commercial car wash that recycles water, instead of washing at home

LCA will continue to monitor stream flows, rainfall totals, and groundwater levels in coordination with state and regional partners. A drought warning does not impose mandatory water use restrictions; however, additional conservation measures may be implemented if dry conditions persist.

Small actions taken by customers can result in substantial conservation across the system. Customers can find conservation tips and drought updates at <https://www.lehighcountyauthority.org/drinking-water/water-supply-updates/> or by following LCA on social media.

About Lehigh County Authority: Lehigh County Authority (LCA) is a public water and wastewater utility committed to protecting public health and the environment by providing high-quality, safe, and reliable water and wastewater services, serving a population of approximately 270,000 people. A nonprofit, public agency, LCA was founded in 1966 by the County of Lehigh and is governed by a nine-member board of directors appointed by the County.

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