

**Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District
Place: 194 Barberry Road, East Haven, Connecticut***

AGENDA

Regular Meeting of Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.

1. Safety Moment
2. Approval of Minutes – July 13, 2022
3. Maple Tree Farm Update: Alden Page
4. Updates on other land and RWA properties, including invasive species update
5. Other Land items
6. Next meeting – Wednesday, September 14, 2022 at 4:30 p.m.
7. Adjourn

*In the event of rain *ONLY*, the meeting will be held remotely. For information on attending the meeting via remote access, and to view meeting documents, please visit <https://tinyurl.com/yp39d7nm>. For questions, contact the board office at jslubowski@rwater.com or call 203-401-2515.

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee Meeting
Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 4:30 pm

IN THE EVENT OF RAIN ONLY!!!

Call in (*audio only*)

[+1 469-965-2517,,434441466#](tel:+14699652517434441466) United States, Dallas

Phone Conference ID: 434 441 466#

For questions, contact the board office at 203-401-2515 or by email at jslubowski@rwater.com

SAFETY MOMENT

AVOID POISON IVY

The stuff grows everywhere – in the yard, beside the highway and in city parks. And if botany's not your thing, follow the old adage: "Leaves of three, let it be." Most of us will develop some sort of rash from exposure to the oils in poison ivy and poison oak. The oil comes from the plant leaf and stem and can stay on your skin, clothes, shoes, work gloves – even your dog.

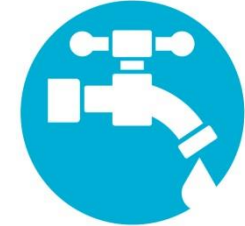
AVOID EXPOSURE TO POISON IVY BY:

- Wearing protective clothing while gardening or hiking in the woods
- Washing skin and clothes well with regular soap or laundry detergent
- Use cortisone cream to treat rashes or use oral antihistamines
- If experiencing more severe symptoms see a doctor



Service – Teamwork – Accountability – Respect – Safety

Tap Into
Safety



Regional Water Authority

Safety is a core company value at the Regional Water Authority .
It is our goal to reduce workplace injuries to zero.

 Regional Water Authority

Representative Policy Board
Land Use Committee
South Central Connecticut Regional Water District

Minutes of July 13, 2022 Meeting

A regular meeting of the Land Use Committee of the Representative Policy Board of the South Central Connecticut Regional Water District (“RWA”) took place on Wednesday, July 13, 2022, at Lake Saltonstall Water Treatment Plant, 1 Saltonstall Highway, East Haven, Connecticut. Chair Betkoski presided.

Committee Members: P. Betkoski, P. DeSantis, B. Eitzer, R. Harvey, M. Horbal, M. Levine, G. Malloy, and J. Mowat Young

Authority: D. Borowy

Management: William Henley, Prem Singh, and Josh Tracy

Staff: J. Slubowski

Chair Betkoski called the meeting to order at 5:42 p.m. He reviewed the Safety Moment distributed to members.

On motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Mr. Eitzer, and unanimously carried, the Committee approved the minutes of its June 8, 2022 meeting.

Mr. Henley, the RWA’s Aquatic Resource Scientist, and Mr. Tracy, the RWA’s Invasive Species Management Technician, provided an update on invasive plant activities at Lake Saltonstall in Branford. They stated that the water chestnut originated in Branford in the 1860’s and it is unknown whether the seeds were spread through the watershed, by birds, or other methods. They reported that the removal process is in its third year and the most successful method is to use a machine that pulls the roots from the pond and deposits them at specific locations where the plants dry out and evaporate. The RWA conducts drone inspections to view and keep up with areas of collection. Messrs. Henley and Tracy reviewed progress maps from 2020 to 2022 of the water chestnut removal progress. It is expected that total elimination of the invasive plant may take up to 6 or 7 years. The RWA has applied for grant funding through the Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection but has been turned down two years in a row. Depending on parameters, it is unknown whether or not the RWA will apply for a grant for the upcoming year.

Update on *The Land We Need for the Water We Use Program* – Mr. Tracy reported:

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
June 30, 2022	91%	93%	88%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
June 2022	3.07	1.34	3.72
Fiscal YTD (6/1/22 – 6/30/22)	3.07	1.34	3.72

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Madison – Corresponded with property owner of 23+/- acres.
- Cheshire, adjacent to Bis property – Got the appraisal from Nadeau and forwarded to Murtha staff. Reviewed affidavit from Murtha and discussed bringing quiet title action to solidify our claim.

- Cheshire, Ricci property – Contacted town to find out status of the OSWLA grant.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Received final Preliminary Assessment. Gave draft disposition application to Sunny for review. Reviewed draft MOU for use with the NBLCT.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – Sent another email to the assistant town attorney without a response. Discussed possibility of razing the house to end the matter.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – 25% complete.
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – Not started yet. **A field memorandum and change order have been executed. A preliminary field meeting between the buyer and RWA representatives was held in June to discuss and resolve issues related to the landings and use of a field. A summer start time is anticipated.**
- Madison - Nathan’s Pond Slash Wall Harvest (MA 6) – 95% complete.
- Seymour - Silvermine Road Slash Wall Harvest (SE 9) – 100% complete. **The screened door within the gate area was repaired by the forester in June, who also showed the hardwood debris to a potential firewood harvester.**
- Killingworth - N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) – Not started yet.
 - Sent overdue notice to logger from the Bethany job (>\$10,000).
 - Reviewing request from someone wanting to harvest mountain laurel.
 - Contractor mowed the Christmas tree plantation.
 - Met with four new woodcutters to set them up in lots.

Recreation

- Trails day hike was held at Maltby Lakes and had 30 attendees.
- Walk about biocontrol of swallowwort given by Gail Reynolds was held at Lake Gaillard and had 12 attendees.
- Walked a portion of the New England (MMM) Trail with CFPA to discuss location of the trail.
- Hired Vincent Torres for the recreation staff.

	June		May	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
Permit Holders	5,334	5,991	5,676	6,337

Special Activity Permits

- Beecher Road School (Barbara Ahern) - Study of bluebirds, native species. Trail walking with viewing of bluebird boxes related to conservation of reservoir area. - Lake Chamberlain Recreation Area – (6/13/2022)
- East Haven Fire Department (Deputy Chief James Murray, Jr.) – low angle ropes training on the side of the hill to practice removal of victims; Saltonstall Treatment Plant inside the gate on the left, (6/6/22-6/9/22).
- Native Plant Trust (formerly New England Wild Flower Society) – (Jessa Finch, Michael Piantedosi, Conservation Director) – study of Aplectrum hyemale which is an orchid called putty-root, Maltby Lakes, (6/7/22-12/31/22)
- Shoreline Outdoor Education Center and Guilford School System (Karen S. Christensen, Ph.D., Director)-Provide geology instruction and collect rock samples from the area- Genesee Tunnel spoils area, Race Hill Road in Madison (06/10/2022-06/10/2023)

- Resources In Search and Rescue, Inc. (Celeste Robitaille and designees)-four day water seminar for training and certification testing of search and rescue K9 teams to assist with locating drowning victims; Gaillard Reservoir south and west portion (6/30/2022-7/3/2022)
- Connecticut State Police K9 Unit (Mr. Ryan Cloukey and designees)-training K9 teams in the discipline of tracking, Lake Gaillard, (6/15/2022-6/15/2023)
- Something Projects (Jennifer Davies and Meg Bloom-artists)-piece of art which will wrap around the pipe displayed in front of the Whitney Water Purification Facility, and another which will hang on the fence facing the waterfall at Water Learning Lab on the grounds of the Eli Whitney Museum, historic artifact pipe in front of Whitney Water Purification Facility and the fence that faces the waterfall near the Water Learning Lab at the Eli Whitney Museum, (8/15/22 – 11/15/22)
- US Forest Service (Ryan Nowak, Research Forester)-re-inventory a forest inventory and analysis research site on the property 215 Sherman Ave., Hamden, (June 28, 2022 – July 31, 2022)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural agreements – Sent draft license amendment to potential farmer at Parish Farm Rd. fields in Branford. Spoke to tenant of the Downs Rd., Hamden field since part of it needs to be used for a timber harvest landing. Renewed license for free ranging chickens in Guilford.
 - East Haven, 167 Saltonstall Parkway (Route 1) (EH 7) – Reached settlement with Lucido’s insurance company. Received and deposited check.
 - East Haven, 9 Pardee Place (EH 6) – Checked the pipe to ensure there was no leakage. Contacted abutter (East Haven Memorial Funeral Home) and sent them a draft license agreement for the encroachment.
 - North Branford, Forest Rd (NB 17) – Noticed fire within a container on the property and sent notice to abutters that it must be extinguished or removed from our property.
 - Trespassing – Forwarded many instances of trespassing to LT members including ATV’s at Lake Chamberlain, fishing after hours at Lake Saltonstall, inflatable boats at Lake Saltonstall, dog walker at Lake Gaillard, ATV’s and illegal fishing at Lake Saltonstall, hikers without permits at Lake Hammonasset, cars inside the Genesee area, dirt bikes off of Reeds Gap Rd. (NB), and a broken lock at the Maltby Lakes entrance.
- Invasive plants – Documented and/or treated invasive populations in Branford, East Haven, North Branford, Cheshire, and Hamden. Specifically addressed areas where invasive plants are encroaching on rare, state-listed species in North Branford and East Haven. DEEP rejected our aquatic invasive grant application for the water chestnut at Furnace Pond. Submitted requisition for harvest of water chestnuts. Met with Gail Reynolds of UConn and students from the University of Rhode Island to put up a cage and release the moths for biocontrol of swallowwort, *Hypena opulenta*.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	88 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	4.7 acres

- Deer hunt – Proficiency test scheduled for July. Participants notified.
- Boundaries – Checked boundaries in North Haven and Seymour.

- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain – Environmental Planning staff heard from one of the agencies needed for the DEEP permit.
- Woodbridge, Laurel Rd. (WO 11) – Met with town engineer and IWEO to look at flood plain of the Wepawaug River on our property.
- Hamden, Clark’s Pond (HA 18) – Responded to question about who was responsible for fixing potholes in the parking lot.
- Cell phone towers – North Haven, Rabbit Rock Tank (NO 1) – Continued discussion with T-Mobile about sharing a generator at this site. Reviewed updated plans from T-Mobile and sent them comments. Environmental Planning staff submitted change-in-use application to DPH.
- Branford, Hosley Brook clearing – Assisted Environmental Planning staff with inland wetland application regarding the clearing and cleaning of the Hosley Brook diversion channel. Attended field meeting of the IW Commission.
- Drones – Conducted drone flights at LGWTP, future Derby tank site, and Hamden Middle School with John Hudak.
- Environmental career camp – ISMT, Forester, NRA, and REM gave presentations to the students enrolled in the WWC’s environmental career camp.

Mr. Singh, the RWA’s Chief Information Digital Office & Vice President of Customer Care, discussed with members the need for staggered security at RWA properties. The RWA is currently in the process of conducting a study to determine needs. Committee members requested that they be included in discussions to express concerns and strategies.

Members also discussed the status of the Skiff Street rental house and received an update of the Derby Tank project.

Chair Betkoski stated that Mr. Page, of the Maple Tree Farm in North Branford, is expected to attend the next meeting on August 10th as a speaker but is unable to make the current scheduled time of 5:30 p.m., but is available at 4:30 p.m. After discussion, it was the consensus of the committee to meet next on Wednesday, August 10, 2022 at 4:30 p.m. Members and the general public will be notified of the meeting site when it is available.

Ms. Young motioned for interest in the chair position for the upcoming year. No members expressed interest in the position. On motion made by Mr. Levine, seconded by Mr. Malloy, and unanimously carried, the committee voted to reappoint Mr. Betkoski as Committee Chairman for 2022-2023.

At 6:30 p.m., on motion made by Mr. Malloy, seconded by Ms. Young, and unanimously carried, the committee meeting adjourned.

Peter Betkoski, Chairman

August 10, 2022
Land Use Committee Meeting

Reservoir Levels (Percent Full)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average	Drought Status
July 31, 2022	82%	97%	81%	None

Rainfall (inches)

	Current Year	Previous Year	Historical Average
July 2022	1.11	9.02	3.71
Fiscal YTD (6/1/22 – 6/30/22)	4.18	10.36	7.43

Land We Need for the Water We Use Program (Dispositions/Acquisitions)

- Cheshire – Corresponded with property owner of 50+/- acres.
- Cheshire, adjacent to Bis property – Continued to discuss process to perfect our claim with Murtha.
- North Branford, Beech St. and Poms La. properties (NB 4) – Discussed MOA with Murtha. They were going to amend the document so that we could share with the NBLCA.

Rental houses:

- Hamden, 233 Skiff St. (HA 9A) – April Capone reached out to the Asst. Town Attorney. Will move toward demolition if there is no progress after a month.
- Hamden, 95 Ives St. – Contacted property own to ask about progress. He said work will start in October.

Forestry Update

- Killingworth - East Hammonasset Leaf Screen Thinning, (KI 4) – 25% complete.
- Hamden - Overstory removal and Tornado Salvage, (HA 36) – Not started yet. **Awaiting start of harvest in the summer.**
- Madison - Nathan’s Pond Slash Wall Harvest (MA 6) – 95% complete.
- Seymour - Silvermine Road Slash Wall Harvest (SE 9) – 100% complete.
- Killingworth - N. Chestnut Hill Patch Cuts, (KI 6) – Not started yet. **Winter start expected.**
 - Discovered rocks blocking our access to Poole Rd., Madison. Contacted town staff about removing them.
 - Monitored stump sprouting and regenerations at the slash wall harvests in Seymour and Madison.
 - Weekly inspected on-going leaf screen thinning harvest in KI 4.
 - Documented a tree cutting encroachment behind 22 Genesee Lane, Madison.

Recreation

- Botany walk at Hopp Brook in Bethany had 10 attendees.
- LED light was installed at the boat launch at Lake Saltonstall to help the rec staff see better in the early morning hours when getting boats ready.
- Discussed crossings of spillway channel with NBLCT for the trail coming from the Harrison Preserve.
- Brought two new Customer Service Reps to recreation areas as part of their orientation.
- One recreation staff member submitted his resignation effective in September. We will not be able to rent boats on Tuesday’s again and perhaps Friday’s too.
- Received email complaints about coyotes at various areas and a bear at the Maltby Lakes.

	July		June	
	2022	2021	2022	2021
Permit Holders	5,218	5,873	5,334	5,991

Special Activity Permits

- Branford Community Television (BCTV) (Ted Ebberts) Rest stop for annual fundraiser “Tour de Branford” - Sugarloaf Parking Lot (10/2/2022)
- Yale University School of the Environment (James Loving Lichtenstein, Donnelley Postdoctoral Fellow) - collecting jumping spiders for behavioral experiment to be performed at a Yale facility. Spiders will be returned afterwards. Behavioral experiments will be aimed to explain results from previous project aimed at understanding the effects of invasive plants on native plant and insect species and vice versa, Lake Gaillard Christmas Tree Field, (7/13/2022)
- Branford Inland Wetland Commission/Town Staff - To allow town staff and Inland Wetland Commission members inspect maintenance work on the Lake Saltonstall Storm Water Treatment System (7/11/22 – 9/1/22)
- UCONN and URI (Gail Reynolds, and designees) – Release biological agent, moth *Hypena opulenta* to help control the population of invasive plants black and pale swallowwort (*Vincetoxicum nigrum* and *V. rossicum*, Lake Gaillard, Lake Saltonstall (7/18/22-7/18/23)

Other items

- Encroachments/agreements –
 - Agricultural agreements – Executed amendment to license agreement for farmer to hay fields at Parish Farm Rd. fields in Branford.
 - East Haven, 9 Pardee Place (EH 6) – Contacted East Haven Memorial Funeral Home and they executed the license agreement for the encroachment, but have yet to send it in.
 - North Branford, North St. Christmas trees (NB 4) – Cave’s have put their farm and house up for sale so that the agreement for Christmas trees at North St. would be available as well.
 - West Haven/Orange/Bethany, Eversource access to ROW’s – Submitted draft license agreements to Eversource for using gates and woods roads in West Haven, Orange, and Bethany to access their ROW’s. Eversource executed the agreements and updated the maps per our request.
 - Trespassing – Forwarded many instances of trespassing to LT members including boats in Lake Chamberlain, broken locks at Maltby Lakes (2x), dog walkers at Hammonasset, fishing at Lake Whitney, tampering with forestry equipment in Seymour, swimming and trash at Hammonasset, swimming in the Sargent River, dumping at Saltonstall, fishermen at Hammonasset, ATV and dirt bike at Gaillard along with trash placed in bags with racial slurs.
- Invasive plants – Documented and/or treated invasive populations in Seymour, Branford, East Haven, Bethany, and North Branford. Helped coordinate the water chestnut harvest at Furnace Pond. This was delayed since the water was too low to accommodate deployment and use of the large harvester. Performed drone flights over Furnace pond and Page’s mill pond to map invasive water chestnut.

Invasive Species Documented/ Mapped (ac)	75.3 acres
Invasive Species Treated (ac/MH)	2.5 acres

- Deer hunt – Proficiency tests held at Lake Gaillard. Twenty-three hunters passed and have entered the hunt.
- Boundaries – Checked boundaries in Hamden.

- East Haven, Beach Ave. watermain – Murtha staff have been in regular contact with the last two private property owners who have not submitted the documents for easements over their properties.
- Cell phone towers – North Haven, Rabbit Rock Tank (NO 1) – Continued discussion with T-Mobile about sharing a generator at this site. East Haven, Saltonstall Ridge (EH 2) - Received notice from Sprint/T-Mobile that they were not going to renew the license for the site on Saltonstall ridge. Discussed what needs to be done with Murtha. Contacted EH assessor to determine how to delete the card for the cell site and asked him who I should speak to about the maintenance of the tower.
- North Branford, LGWTP campus (NB 1) – Submitted work request to mow western edge of property after request of abutter.
- North Branford, Ric Ct. – Passed along inquiry asking about getting water service in this neighborhood.
- Well abandonments – Continued filing these agreements on the land records with Contracts staff so they are part of title searches for property buyers.
- Hamden, main break Paradise Ave. – Supplied additional information to other RWA staff regarding the properties lines in this area.
- Drone flights - Performed drone flight with John Hudak at West River to document the DAF project for engineering.

Attachments

- July 1, 2022 - Proposed Aquarion Water Rates Could Gradually Increase Costs by 27% - WVIT
- July 8, 2022 - Waters of the U.S. Definition: Clean Water Act Update – National Law Review
- July 14, 2022 - RWA to customers: Reduce water use due to state drought declaration – WTNH
- July 20, 2022 - EPA issues new advisory on ‘forever chemicals’ in drinking water – MyNews13
- July/August 2022 – Note about Lake Whitney Dam work – Preservation CT newsletter
- July 25, 2022 - A group of Connecticut cicadas disappeared nearly 70 years ago. Scientists still search for answers – WNPR

Upcoming Agenda Items

September 2022 -

Proposed Aquarion Water Rates Could Gradually Increase Costs by 27%

Published July 1, 2022 - WVIT

A proposal by the Aquarion Water Company aims to gradually increase costs for consumers, reaching up to a 27% increase.

The water company filed a notice with the Public Utilities Regulatory Authority (PURA) indicating their intent to seek a rate increase.

In a statement, the company said it's been nine and a half years since its last rate review and since then, they've invested \$740 million in critical infrastructure. That investment aims to ensure the high quality of its customers' drinking water.

The gradual increase proposes to raise rates 13.9% in year one, an additional 6.9% in year two and an added 4.2% in year three.

"Aquarion's reliable water service and hydrant maintenance also help fire departments across Connecticut protect lives, residences, and businesses," an Aquarion spokesperson said in a statement.

Attorney General William Tong said his office "will intervene to vigorously review and scrutinize every aspect of this rate request."

"The last thing Connecticut families and small businesses need right now is a double-digit water bill hike, on top of steadily mounting surcharges. I fully support modernizing our aging water infrastructure, but we need to make sure we are doing it in a way that respects the financial pressures Connecticut families and small businesses are facing right now," Tong said in a statement.

Aquarion officials said their water rates are among the most affordable in the industry and in Connecticut. They said their competitive rates will continue even with the proposed rate schedules.

"The Office of Consumer Counsel will advocate vigorously for Aquarion water customers throughout this rate proceeding to ensure a just and reasonable outcome. Rising water prices are a challenge across the country, and water is becoming increasingly unaffordable for many low-income households, which presents serious health and safety risks. I am dedicated to fighting for affordable and equitable water rates for all Connecticut residents," said Consumer Counsel Claire Coleman.

Aquarion was acquired by Eversource in 2017, according to Tong. Eversource deferred to Aquarion officials for information on the price hike.

Waters of the U.S. Definition: Clean Water Act Update

July 8, 2022 - National Law Review

Two recent events related to the Clean Water Act have piqued the interest of many who watch the goings on at the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

One involves the Spring Unified Regulatory Update published the week of June 20 which reports that the EPA plans to issue an interim final rule defining the Waters of the United States (WOTUS) in August. This is a month or two in advance of the scheduled U.S. Supreme Court oral argument in the current *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency* case on October 3, 2022. The regulatory agenda also proposes that a final WOTUS rule be published in March 2023.

It is certainly possible, if not probable, the government will seek to supplement its briefing in *Sackett v. Environmental Protection Agency*, which the U.S. Supreme Court will take up in the fall, after issuing an interim final WOTUS definition. The case deals with a challenge to EPA authority and whether a wetland is covered under the Clean Water Act. Based on the government's characterization of the impact of *Sackett's* proposed WOTUS definition, it is unlikely that the EPA will issue a definition of WOTUS that would cause the Sacketts to agree their appeal is moot.

The other involves a complaint filed on June 22 in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Georgia by Twin Pines Minerals, LLC against the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers alleges that on June 3, 2022, the Corps rescinded two approved jurisdictional determinations (AJD), one issued in 2020 and another in 2021, on the basis that the AJDs are not valid "because government-to-government consultations" were not conducted as requested by local Indian tribes. The proposed project is close to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

The Corps' rescission memorandum notes that if the company seeks new AJDs, they will be issued under the terms of the WOTUS rules in effect at the time.

The mining company pleads that the Corps consultation policy in effect at the time of the granting of both AJDs did not provide for third-party input (i.e. tribes) on the technical information about the soil, vegetation and hydrology that guides the definition of a wetland. The same Corps memorandum rescinded the AJDs for the Rosemont mine in Arizona. The Corps also has said that it will not issue a Clean Water Act 404 permit without first completing an environmental impact statement, which would not have been required if the two AJDs were in effect.

RWA to customers: Reduce water use due to state drought declaration

WTNH - Jul 14, 2022

HARTFORD, Conn. (WTNH) — Governor Ned Lamont declared all eight counties in Connecticut are experiencing Stage 2 drought conditions due to below-normal precipitation across the state on Tuesday.

Last week, the Regional Water Authority (RWA) asked its customers to reduce their water use by 10%.

Stage 2 is the second of five stages under the state's drought plan adopted in 2018. It indicates an emerging drought event, that potentially impacts water supplies, agriculture, or natural ecosystems.

"I look at Stage 2 as a public awareness stage," said Martin Heft, the Office of Policy & Management undersecretary. "We want to get the word out and say, 'hey! We have a Stage 3 that's on the horizon. That means a drought event is coming, so here are things you can do as a resident, business, state agency, to start preparing.'"

The RWA says customers can eliminate non-essential water use this summer by following these tips:

Check for any dripping faucets or running toilets. A leaky faucet that drips at the rate of one drip per second can waste more than 3,000 gallons of water per year. The average leaky toilet can waste about 200 gallons of water per day. That's over 6,000 gallons of water a month.

A bath typically uses up to 70 gallons of water, whereas a five-minute shower will use only 10-25 gallons, depending on the efficiency of your showerhead. So shower to save water.

Turning off the faucet while brushing your teeth can save as much as four gallons of water. If you brush your teeth in the morning and at night, that adds up to saving 200 gallons of water a month. The same is true when you wash your hands.

When cleaning dishes, scrape your dirty dishes into the trash and then put them into the dishwasher. The average dishwasher uses six gallons of water per cycle; more efficient dishwashers use four gallons per cycle. A running faucet uses about two gallons per minute.

Wash only full loads of clothes. Older top-loading machines use 40 gallons of water to wash a full load. Today's newer standard models use 27 gallons, and more efficient Energy Star washers use 14 gallons per wash.

Use a broom instead of a hose to clean patios, sidewalks, and driveways. Water flows from a hose at about six gallons of water a minute. If it takes 30 minutes to clean a patio or deck, using a broom saves 500 gallons of water.

"Just a few simple steps to conserve 10% of water use will help prolong available water supplies, reduce demand on the system and stress on local water resources as well as on the environment, and lower customer bills," said Larry Bingaman, RWA president and CEO.

State officials also ask residents and businesses across the state to take the following measures to help minimize future drought impact:

Reduce automatic outdoor irrigation

Postpone the planting of any new lawns or vegetation

Minimize overall water use by fixing leaky plumbing and fixtures

Follow any additional conservation requests issued by water suppliers or municipalities

This hot, dry weather has impacted farms across the state.

"Up until really three weeks ago, we've been getting pretty decent moisture," explained John Lyman, executive vice president of Lyman Orchards. "We're seeing now the effect of the dry weather."

Lyman told News 8 that if these conditions continue, they will become more serious.

"Typically, the vegetables and small fruits, they're shallower rooted, so they'll be impacted sooner than the tree fruit that is deeper rooted," Lyman said. "Farmers will tell you they prefer a dry year over a wet year. Last year was a really wet year and a lot of farms suffered because of that."

Without a raindrop in sight on Thursday, families could leisurely pick their own fruits at Lyman Orchards.

"Lyman is a really good place to pick blueberries!" 9-year-old Linnea said. "I was picking blueberries with my mom and grandma!"

There are some benefits, however, of this dry weather. It has staved off diseases that impact fruit, and fruit, such as raspberries, are sweeter and juicier because of the dry weather.

EPA issues new advisory on 'forever chemicals' in drinking water

MyNews 13 – Orlando, FL – Jul. 20, 2022

The Environmental Protection Agency is updating its guidance on chemicals found in the drinking water of communities around the country that can lead to cancer and other negative health effects.

The interim updated health advisory addresses two of the most studied PFAS and announced that “some negative health effects may occur with concentrations of perfluorooctanoic acid (PFOA) or perfluorooctane sulfonic acid (PFOS) in water that are near zero and below EPA’s ability to detect at this time.”

PFAS are dubbed “forever chemicals” because they don’t naturally break down in the environment. Because of their prevalence in industry and consumer products for decades, the EPA says most people have been exposed to PFAS at some point, but it has some negative health effects in high concentrations and/or long periods of exposure.

In its previous advisory from 2016, the EPA stated that levels of PFOA and PFOS that were at least 70 parts per trillion (ppt) or below were deemed safe. One part per trillion is equivalent to a grain of sand in an Olympic-sized swimming pool.

The updated interim health advisory now states that the minimum reporting level for both PFOA and PFOS is now 4 ppt. Health advisories are non-enforceable and non-regulatory, but exist to “provide information on contaminants that can cause health effects and are known or expected to occur in drinking water,” according to the EPA.

Stel Bailey, an advocate for clean drinking water in Brevard County and the founder of Fight for Zero, was one of dozens of people present at the Third National PFAS Conference in Wilmington, N.C., when the EPA made its announcement.

“In the beginning of this, we were criticized and dismissed and told things were safe and normal and nobody really wanted to listen to us,” Bailey said. “So, to get that confirmation that all of this work wasn’t nothing, it brings hope to communities, like ours, and advocates across the nation that we need to continue in this work to fight for zero chemicals in our waterways that are harmful to human health.”

The EPA noted that this wasn’t a final advisory, but a stepping stone. A PFAS National Drinking Water Regulation will be proposed this fall.

“The EPA’s work to identify and confront the risks that PFAS pose to human health and the environment is a key component in the Biden-Harris Administration whole-of-government approach to confronting these emerging contaminants,” the EPA said in a statement. “This strategy includes steps by the Food and Drug Administration to increase testing for PFAS in food and packaging, by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help dairy farmers address contamination of livestock, and by the Department of Defense to clean-up contaminated military installations and the elimination of unnecessary PFAS uses.”

This update not only addressed PFOA and PFOS on an interim basis but also issued a final health advisory on two other types of PFAS: perfluorobutane sulfonic acid and its potassium salt (PFBS) and for hexafluoropropylene oxide (HFPO) dimer acid and its ammonium salt (“GenX” chemicals).

According to the EPA, GenX chemicals are used as a replacement for PFOA and PFBS are used to replace PFOS. It states that the minimum reporting level for GenX chemicals is 5 ppt and 3 ppt for PFBS.

A health advisory would come into play for GenX chemicals at 10 ppt in drinking water and 2,000 ppt for PFBS.

With the new updates, the EPA states analytical methods can still detect GenX chemicals and PFBS at the current health advisory levels, but not PFOA and PFOS. Therefore, it recommends that “if water systems detect PFOA and PFOS, they take steps such as informing residents, undertaking monitoring and examining steps to limit exposure.”

What’s being done?

Back in February 2019, the EPA released its PFAS Action Plan, which by Oct. 18, 2021 became the PFAS Strategic Roadmap, which offered “a whole-of-agency approach to addressing PFAS.”

Part of the federal government’s response to the increasing understanding about the impact of PFAS is to use some of the money set aside in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help communities around the country tackle PFAS contamination.

The law earmarks \$5 billion for this, with the first \$1 billion now available through grant funding. The EPA will reach out to states regarding how to submit their letters of intent, which are due by Aug. 15, 2022.

As of June 24, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) said it had not yet received more details from the EPA on the funds.

States were also provided \$3.4 billion in funds through the Drinking Water State Revolving Funds (SRFs) and \$3.2 billion via the Clean Water SRFs.

From those pools of money, Florida received \$275,404,000. This amount came from five different funds or programs.

Florida's response to PFAS

Prior to the federal action plan, in 2018, FDEP began working with the University of Florida Center for Environment and Human Toxicology "to develop and update the provisional cleanup target levels (CTLs) and screening levels for irrigation and surface water."

They have targeted assessment work in three areas of their Waste Cleanup Program: fire training facilities, dry cleaners and state-funded cleanup sites.

An FDEP spokesperson told Spectrum News that even when there is no viable party connected with the PFAS contamination, they can begin cleanup work.

In March of this year, FDEP published a PFAS Dynamic Plan with the following stated objectives:

Continue to be a national leader in response to PFAS concerns and to protect Florida's communities from PFAS exposure.

Provide a technical and regulatory framework for the development of screening and cleanup target levels for protecting human health and the environment.

Implement a response strategy that minimizes risks to human health and protects Florida's natural resources.

Identify PFAS contamination through site investigations.

Continue efforts to prevent/reduce further effects through outreach and communication.

Continue efforts to identify areas of potential or known contamination and address environmental impacts through risk mitigation and remediation.

Most recently, the Florida Legislature passed HB 1475, which Governor Ron DeSantis signed into law on June 20.

It states that if the EPA "has not finalized its standards for PFAS in drinking water, groundwater and soil by January 1, 2025, the department (FDEP) shall adopt by rule statewide cleanup target levels for PFAS... with priority given to PFOA and PFOS."

Those prospective new rules wouldn't take effect until they are ratified by the legislature.

"I think that was a step in the right direction. If we keep going in that direction, and we keep following the science, I think we have hope in this state for cleaning up these chemicals," Bailey said.

Briefly noted

Historic American Engineering Record, HAER, CT-186-C-3

Hamden. ►

The South Central Connecticut Regional Water Authority (RWA) announced that the Lake Whitney dam (1862; NR) will be repaired and strengthened using federal infrastructure funding. The dam was built by Eli Whitney, Jr., to replace an earlier one constructed by his father to provide power for the Whitney Armory, which manufactured rifles for the U.S. Army. The business continued under Whitney Jr. who also used Lake Whitney to supply the New Haven Water Company, predecessor to RWA. Since 2005 water from Lake Whitney has been supplied to RWA customers after treatment at the Whitney Water Purification Facility; the repairs will ensure the reliability of the water supply as well as continued protection for homes and businesses downstream. To comply with modern safety requirements while preserving the historic dam, RWA plans to construct a new, solid-concrete dam immediately behind the original rubble-stone structure. Work is expected to begin in 2023 and take about two to three years to complete.



Lisbon Historical Society



A group of Connecticut cicadas disappeared nearly 70 years ago. Scientists still search for answers.

Connecticut Public Radio | By Patrick Skahill - July 25, 2022

On a hill overlooking the Fenton River Valley, John Cooley gestures to a horizon blanketed with trees. It's the bucolic embodiment of New England's forested landscape. It's also the scene of a mystery that's puzzled scientists for nearly 70 years. What happened to a group of periodical cicadas that used to live here? "You would think this is perfect periodical cicada habitat; there's no shortage of forest," said John Cooley, a member of University of Connecticut's Hartford teaching faculty who travels the country tracking and studying periodical cicadas. This year should mark the emergence of Brood XI, which was plunked in the northern reaches of habitable cicada territory. But scientists haven't seen that group since 1954, when two went into the valley Cooley is overlooking to search for cicadas. "They came out here one day and collected a bunch of cicadas and probably didn't think too much about it," Cooley said. "In retrospect, that's turned out to be really important." "That's the last time it's been seen," Cooley said. Today, scientists believe, but aren't totally sure, that the brood is extinct. And there's only one way to test that: head into the valley and search. That's why we are here. To go look for some cicadas.

Hunting for cicadas

Periodical cicadas emerge from underground every 13 to 17 years, depending on the group, to mate, lay eggs and die. Connecticut's last big emergence was in 2013. When you're in a cicada emergence, it's like nothing else on Earth. Millions of insects erupt above ground for a few short weeks. It's magical. It's also extremely noisy. Here's sound from an emergence Cooley recorded in upstate New York in 2018. But in the Fenton River Valley, there are trees now grown stories high that were barely saplings the last time the hills carried the chorus of these charismatic, red-eyed insects. Cicadas are important indicators of forest health that spend years underground feeding on tree roots and cycling nutrients through a forest. Cooley said they're one connection in a complex ecological web we don't fully understand. "Start breaking those connections – you don't actually know what's gonna happen," Cooley said.

As for why Brood XI disappeared, there are ideas. Cooley said the group was situated on the northern edge of habitable territory for cicadas — and living on the edge can give less wiggle room for survival. "They're limited by the conditions: either the harshness of the winter or ... the shortness of the growing season," Cooley said. But no one is really sure why the cicadas vanished. Or if they're even really gone.

Listening for cicadas

Walking through a small neighborhood near the Ashford-Willington border, Cooley kept his eyes (well, mostly his ears) open for any hint of cicada activity. Light broke through the tree canopy, and he suddenly stopped to listen. "Oh, look, here comes the sun. Now we listen," Cooley said, pausing and looking toward the trees. "What do we hear? I don't hear any cicadas." This is unglamorous science. Slogging down a street in the warm weather to look for an insect that's almost certainly disappeared. Cooley said when he came to this spot in 2005 – the last scheduled emergence of Brood XI – he actually put flyers in mailboxes here, begging people to report cicada sightings with a \$100 reward. "People thought I was crazy," he said. "I thought, I'm not going to be paying out. And nobody took us up on it." Cooley took me to a forest edge bumping up against the street that would be a prime spot for males to call. If there aren't a lot of cicadas, they can be hard to see and hear. But they can be enticed, if you know their mating sounds. Cooley imitates the whistling call of a male and a female's clicking response. He's hoping to draw out a Brood XI survivor. We walked around the neighborhood for about 90 minutes: calling, looking, listening, but finding nothing. Cooley said it's that search, even if it's for something that in all likelihood is gone, that cuts to the core of scientific inquiry. Yes, Brood XI is extinct, scientists believe. But how can biologists be sure if they don't come out every 17 years to look, question and verify? "I have to test those statements that were made, and established, they still seem to hold," Cooley said. "We do it because wouldn't it be something if we did hear a cicada." So today, he'll go back to his lab and write down that he observed no cicadas. And in 17 years, he hopes to be back again, calling, looking, and listening to see if he finds anything. After all, he said, that's curiosity – that's science. "Maybe they are in a pocket somewhere up that valley," Cooley said. "We keep looking."