

## Voluntary Water Conservation Measures

### All Members:

Try to eliminate water leaks on your premises.

Check for leaking toilets – place a few drops of food coloring into your toilet tank, without flushing the toilet, and wait fifteen minutes. If there is color in your toilet bowl, your toilet is not quite watertight, and this can add up to a lot of water over the course of a month.

Private water softeners are a common source of leaks; if you have one, inspect it according to manufacturer specifications or guidance from your plumber.

Water lawns and gardens only between the hours of 8:00 PM and 8:00 AM; cut your grass no less than 3” tall (taller grass retains soil moisture better).

Avoid draining and filling private swimming pools, wading pools, and the like.

Do not wash your car at home, or use water to clean driveways, sidewalks, etc.

If you see a potential leak – say, lots of standing water in an area served by us with no recent weather to explain it and no cattails or other local plant life to suggest that the water is of natural origin – reach out to us. Members who report leaks in our water system previously unknown to us receive credit equal to their monthly minimum on their next bill.

### Agricultural Members:

Agriculture is the heart of our region’s economy and we understand that there are limits to how much water you can conserve – spraying tanks need to be filled and livestock need water. **If you are an agricultural user who also has access to a working well, we ask that you consider making more use of that well for purposes that do not need the highest quality water this spring and summer.**

If this is not possible for you, we ask that you try **slowing down the rate at which you fill tanks** – it really does help us quite a lot if the same total amount of water is used more slowly over a longer period.

### Community Members:

To our full-time community members – **Portsmouth, Earling, Panama, Avoca, Brayton, and Exira** – we will need to work together. Deal with leaks and wasted water in your communities, and work with your local users to further conserve water. If you are aware of any large usage planned in your towns – such as filling a swimming pool, for instance – we ask that you try slowing how fast you use that water, and if possible, reach out to us ahead of time to let us know of your plans so we can have the capacity in place ahead of time. If you find that your systems need tools or assistance of some other kind to deal with leaks and water loss, please

reach out to us – we may not always have a solution, but we can't help if we don't know that you need help.

To our back-up and emergency community partners – **Harlan, Minden, Elk Horn, and Shelby** – we are all in this together, and we know that some of your own water supplies are in such a state that you may want to look to us more than you have in previous years. We are here to work with you – but we'll need you to take those same water conservation measures within your communities and we ask for your continued understanding on any limits we might have to set or enforce as to volumes and flows, as we are all feeling the pinch right now.

### **Hospitality Members:**

For our members in the restaurant, hotel and other hospitality businesses, we know that the last three years have already been extremely unusual due to the pandemic, and there may not seem like much more you can do to further conserve water – but we still must ask you to look at what else can be done. Make sure that the water you buy is water you *use* by fixing leaky plumbing. Be efficient with laundry and dishwashing – to the extent that you can do so without compromising hygiene requirements for public health.

### **What We Will Do:**

Regional Water employees will continue to work to operate a high-quality water system for all our members. You may at times see a spray or flow of water from a hydrant as we flush water from our mains: while we do this mindful of how precious that water is, some amount of flushing is unavoidable to maintain good water quality, especially in rural systems.

Likewise, Regional Water will continue to aggressively work on reducing water loss. With the limits of our resources and the difficulty of finding leaks on approximately twelve hundred miles of pipeline, this takes time, but we are implementing new techniques and tools all the time.

We have been understanding over the past years of the ongoing pandemic, its financial stress on people, and the need for water to maintain good hygiene – and the enormous majority of our members have proven that understanding to be well-placed by doing the right thing. However, as a water conservation measure, we will be much more assertive about disconnects for nonpayment. If you are behind on your water bill, are not able to quickly make things right, and have not entered into a payment plan, we urge you to contact us to arrange one promptly: a water account that is current on its payment plan will not be disconnected, but otherwise, delinquent accounts will be disconnected after the period and notices required by Iowa law and our rules, and will incur the usual fees to be reconnected.