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Christie Administration Urges Customers of Middlesex County Utility Authority to Further Reduce Water Use

Tuesday, November 6, 2012

Tags: [Hurricane Sandy](#)

Effort will Prevent Polluting Runoff Into Raritan River and Raritan Bay While Pumps are Brought Back Online

Trenton, NJ – Residents and businesses in the 36 towns served by the Middlesex County Utilities Authority's (MCUA) wastewater treatment system are advised to further minimize water use to reduce stress on the storm-damaged sewage treatment system and help limit polluting effluent now flowing into the Raritan River and Raritan Bay. The MCUA, which serves 797,000 customers in Middlesex, Somerset and Union counties, is working closely with the state Department of Environmental Protection, federal Environmental Protection Agency, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to repair pump station damage caused by severe flooding that is currently limiting treatment to all but about 25 percent of the system's customers.

"While the Governor already has issued an executive order calling for mandatory water use restrictions, we are asking MCUA customers to be extra diligent in conserving water to slow the flow of effluents into the river and bay, and limit environmental impacts " said DEP Commissioner Bob Martin.

The MCUA's treatment plant is fully operational but two of its three pump stations, which normally handle 110 million gallons of wastewater daily, are not working, so wastewater is not being shipped to the treatment facility. The result is the discharge of untreated sewage into the waterways.

About 10 million gallons a day is being processed through the MCUA's South Amboy pump station. It is anticipated that the Edison pump station, which processes about 20 million gallons a day, will be on line later this week.

The MCUA's main pump station, the Sayreville station, is currently off line but has a temporary bypass pump system in place to handle about 20 million gallons a day. It normally processes 75 million gallons daily. All electrical equipment at the Sayreville facility, including pumps, motors and electric control are being disassembled, dried, tested and reassembled.

The following towns are served by the MCUA: Bound Brook, Bridgewater, Carteret, Cranbury, Dunellen, East Brunswick, Edison, Fanwood, Franklin Township, Green Brook, Helmetta, Highland Park, Jamesburg, Metuchen, Middlesex Borough, Milltown, Monroe Township, New Brunswick, North Brunswick, North Plainfield, Old Bridge, Perth Amboy, Piscataway, Plainfield, Sayreville, Scotch Plains, South Amboy, South Bound Brook, South Brunswick, South Plainfield, South River, Spotswood, Warren Township, Watchung and Woodbridge.

The Christie Administration's Executive and Administrative Orders on water use includes the following statewide water use restrictions, prohibitions and exemptions:

All indoor water use, including showers, baths, toilet flushing, and domestic cleaning, must be conducted with minimum amounts of water;

Non-essential outdoor water use is prohibited;

Watering of grass, lawns and landscapes is prohibited except for newly sodded or seeded areas done by professional landscapers or immediately following a commercial application of fertilizer, pesticide or herbicides; minimum amount of water should be used during these applications;

Use of water for washing paved surfaces, such as streets, sidewalks, driveways, garages, parking lots and patios is prohibited;

Outdoor use of water for ornamental or aesthetic purposes, including fountains, artificial waterfalls, and reflecting pools is prohibited, except to preserve or support wildlife

Use of water for municipal street sweeping is allowed only with non-potable water and with minimal use necessary;

Use of water for power washing of buildings is prohibited except for commercial enterprises engaged in power washing, and with minimum water use;

Car and truck washing, except for emergency vehicles, is prohibited;

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Commercial car washing is allowed but with reduced rinse cycles and use of recycled water for pre-rinsing of vehicles;

Cars and trucks at dealerships may only be washed just prior to delivery, with wash time limited to three minutes;

Serving of water in restaurants, clubs, or other eating establishments is prohibited unless specifically requested by patrons.

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