

For Immediate Release

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Town of Amherst Lifts Water Ban

The Town of Amherst has lifted the mandatory water ban that had been imposed on August 19th. The ban was instituted in response to an extended period of dry weather and a multi-year drought.

“Amherst residents and our institutional partners: Amherst College, Hampshire College, and the University of Massachusetts - have done an excellent job at curtailing water usage during the ban,” said Town Manager Paul Bockelman. “We must all remain vigilant and continue to use water efficiently. One rain storm or a wet winter will not relieve us from the need to use less water in the future.”

Most of Massachusetts continues to experience drought conditions, according to State and Federal agencies. “We are able to lift the water ban at this time because the activities that were prohibited are those that generally occur in warmer, milder weather” said Amy Rusiecki, Assistant Superintendent of Public Works.

Currently Amherst’s water supply needs are being served by its network of wells. The Centennial Reservoir was recently brought on line, in accordance with its normal schedule. However, water levels at Atkins Reservoir still remain below normal. November received average precipitation resulting in some recharge to water supplies. However, overall recharge to groundwater remains below normal both in Amherst and across the majority of the state.

Residents are asked to continue to be mindful of their water usage. Although the ban has been lifted, conservation efforts are still necessary to ensure long term supply.

During the water ban, Town officials met regularly with representatives from its institutional partners Amherst College, the University of Massachusetts and Hampshire College. Assistant Town Manager David Ziomek, who led this effort, stated that it was a collaborative effort of the Town, partners, staff, faculty and residents that the Town sustained sufficient supply during the most crucial period. “Our ability to maintain the town’s water supply was the result of everyone paying attention and doing their part to ensure we did not find ourselves in a more critical situation,” said Ziomek. “The Town is especially grateful to DPW Superintendent Guilford Mooring and Assistant DPW Superintendent Amy Rusiecki for their diligence, communication and planning efforts.”

For more information, contact Amherst Sustainability Coordinator, Stephanie Ciccarello at ciccarellos@amherstma.gov.

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