



Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection

Rachel Carson State Office Building

P.O. Box 8555

Harrisburg, PA 17105-8555

August 9, 2007

**Bureau of Watershed Management
Office of the Commonwealth Drought Coordinator**

717-772-4048

Dear Physical Plant, Grounds or Athletic Field Director:

We are writing to inform you about the drought watch declaration, which Secretary Kathleen McGinty announced on Monday, August 6, 2007 on behalf of Governor Ed Rendell. This declaration is for the following 58 counties:

Adams	Columbia	Lackawanna	Snyder
Allegheny	Crawford	Lawrence	Somerset
Armstrong	Cumberland	Lebanon	Sullivan
Beaver	Dauphin	Luzerne	Susquehanna
Bedford	Elk	Lycoming	Tioga
Blair	Erie	McKean	Union
Bradford	Fayette	Mercer	Venango
Butler	Forest	Mifflin	Warren
Cambria	Franklin	Monroe	Washington
Cameron	Fulton	Montour	Wayne
Carbon	Greene	Northumberland	Westmoreland
Centre	Huntingdon	Perry	Wyoming
Clarion	Indiana	Pike	York
Clearfield	Jefferson	Potter	
Clinton	Juniata	Schuylkill	

The declaration comes in response to escalating precipitation deficits, low stream flows and declining ground water levels. Ninety-day accumulated precipitation deficits extend up to about -5.6 inches within the 58 county region.

While there is no current prohibition of water use under this drought watch declaration, we are keeping you informed of the current drought conditions and bringing to your attention Pennsylvania's drought regulations that would take effect in the event that conditions warrant the declaration of a drought emergency within the commonwealth.

In the event of a declared drought emergency, Section 4(2) of 4 Pa. Code Chapter 119 would prohibit the use of any water for watering athletic fields within a drought emergency area; except, water "may be applied...beginning 2 weeks prior to use of the athletic field for practice, regular season play or other organized use and continuing through the end of the same practice or regular season or other organized use, in accordance with a schedule that has been submitted, at least 7 days prior to implementation, to the Commonwealth Drought Coordinator, the local law enforcement agency and, if applicable, to the public water supply agency from which the water is obtained." The schedule must list,



for each week of the season, the day that watering will occur on each field. This allows you the flexibility to water on a different day each week to accommodate your athletic event schedule.

Certain other exceptions apply to tennis courts. Exceptions also apply to athletic field grass areas approved as part of a sewage or storm water treatment system utilizing spray irrigation.

If you own or manage a sand-based (man-made root zone that contains a minimum of 60% sand, by weight, in the top 4 to 12 inches of the root zone) athletic field, then you would need to comply with additional requirements that allow water to be applied only "in accordance with a plan approved by the Commonwealth Drought Coordinator." Complete copies of the regulations, including the Application for Approval of a Sand-Based Athletic Field Drought Emergency Operations Plan and instructions for completing the application form can be found on our Drought Information Center Web site at www.depweb.state.pa.us, Keyword: "Drought."

We stand ready to answer any questions you may have regarding these regulations or the application for plan approval. You may contact us at 717-772-4048 or at droughtinfo@state.pa.us.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Susan K. Weaver". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'S' and 'W'.

Susan K. Weaver, P.E.
Commonwealth Drought Coordinator

Enclosure