

FOREST LAKES MUTUAL WATER COMPANY

Conservation, Water Waste & Excessive Use Policy

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The Forest Lakes Mutual Water Company (FLMWC or Company) water system is a closed system based on 9 active wells, 11 tanks, and 327 connections (homes and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs)). Forest Lakes began as a vacation community in the 1920s. As homes were built, neighbors joined together to pay for wells, tanks and piping to deliver water to different parts of the community as they were developed. Over time, this patchwork of micro-water systems were connected together to develop the single water system we use today. This system is now capable of delivering water to all of Forest Lakes.

Shareholder assessments are currently the sole source of revenue to provide these services. Unlike most municipal water companies, FLMWC does not currently charge its customers based on usage so that higher water use results in increased revenue. Our assessments are a flat rate which pay for the maintenance of roads and the maintenance and delivery of clean, safe, water.

As a community, we need to be conscientious and responsible with our water use, especially during prolonged periods of drought, and during emergencies. Our water supply is not limitless, and the system only generates so many gallons per hour. To effectively manage our water supply and to ensure water remains sufficiently available under all conditions, Forest Lakes Water Company periodically reviews its policies and procedures related to water use and overuse.

The purposes here are to:

- Establish per household water allocations under various conditions.
- Establish clear guidelines for resolving water use issues, including excessive use.

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Policy Goals:

The goal of FLMWC is to ensure that an essential, limited resource is not wasted or threatened by excessive use beyond typical water consumption activities. Another goal is to implement an excessive use fee structure that reinforces the need to protect our community water supply and cover the costs associated with lost water and actions taken to resolve an excessive use issue.

Maintenance Requirements:

Untreated leaks can waste hundreds or thousands of gallons of water within a short period of time.

- Shareholders are responsible for water use on their property, whether owner occupied or not. Residents and absentee owners should be familiar with water usage limits and rules, and as applicable, make tenants aware of them as well.
- FLMWC requires all leaks be repaired within 14 days after being discovered or notified, whichever comes first. If use is above 500 gpd, water will be shut off and instruction will be provided for turning water on when needed, until the repair can be completed. Shareholders are responsible for all pipes and plumbing on the customer/house side of the meter.

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To ensure that an essential, limited resource is not used indiscriminately, and to implement an excessive use fee structure that reinforces the need to protect our community water supply, the following policy provisions shall apply.

It is the policy of Forest Lakes Mutual Water Company to prohibit any use of water that threatens our water system. This includes but is not limited to:

- Failure to promptly repair any plumbing leaks or malfunctions.
- Intentional excessive use of water beyond posted conservation stage for any reason, other than the immediate need to protect life or property.
- Private wells drilled anywhere within Forest Lakes' exclusive water rights boundary.
- Water use that threatens our water supply. Our system only produces water at a fixed rate. Sustained heavy draws of water will deplete the reserves needed for fire suppression in case of active fire in the community. Using water to fight a fire on your property is allowed. Water used to water down your property because there's a fire somewhere else is not, and is subject to penalty.

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Water Conservation Stage

Below are the conservation stages and factors used to set them by the management and board of directors.

Water Conservation Stages	Conditions	Water User Reduction Measures
Stage 1: Normal Mandatory Use Limit: 250 GPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Average rainfall with no drought conditions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary conservation by all users
Stage 2: Conserve Mandatory Use Limit: 200 GPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Overall system capacity First year plus of regional drought conditions Below average rainfall Excessive pumping load by system by users Professional judgment of FLMWC Operations Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Voluntary conservation by all users Limit all outdoor water use Encouraged to convert to drip, low-volume irrigation Encouraged to update to water-wise showerheads, faucet, toilets and appliances
Stage 3: Warning Mandatory Use Limit: 150 GPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Second year plus of regional drought conditions Below average rainfall Excessive pumping load on system by users Professional judgment of FLMWC Operations Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stage 2 measures + Manual operation of irrigation - Hand-held watering – only using hoses with shut-off nozzles. Outdoor water use for odd addresses Mon. & Thurs., even addresses Tue. & Fri. No filling pools, spas, or ponds Non-essential use prohibited
Stage 4: Severe Mandatory Use Limit: 125 GPD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Serious drought conditions Tank levels not maintained Tank(s) below Fire Dept. requirements Reduced well capacity (falling water levels) Potentially trucking water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No outdoor water use Non-essential indoor water use prohibited
Stage 5: Critical Mandatory Use Limit: 100 GPD Or- As set by the operations manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tank(s) are empty Trucking in water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you have water, use only for necessary hygiene.

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Notification Methods for Excessive Use:

FLMWC has developed a color-coded system for determining the level or “tier” of excessive use for the purpose of assessing a fee (see page 11 of this policy). If excessive use tiers have been reached, warning notifications are sent to the shareholder. Unless otherwise stated, notification(s) may be made by staff visit, phone, email or notice left at the residence.

Warning Notifications:

For water use within the yellow tier of any water conservation stage, the following notification procedures will apply:

Initial Notification: Notification of the violation will be communicated to the shareholder. If there is an indication of a leak shareholders will be contacted. Staff will be available to help shareholders assess the situation. If use exceeds conservation stage limits than a shareholder’s meter will be read within 7 days of the initial notification.

Second Notification: If initial notification has been communicated and no response has been received, and upon second meter reading use still exceeds conservation stage limits, FLMWC shall issue a Second Notification to the shareholder.

Final Notification: If a) no response to the Second Notification has been received, b) satisfactory arrangements have not been made for correction or c) timely verification of correction has not occurred, a restrictor may be placed on the shareholder’s service line and excessive use fees will be charged for each calendar day in which the violation occurs. All subsequent meter readings which exceed the current conservation stage limit will result in an Excessive Usage Statement and Penalty Fee, billed per the Board-approved tiered overage penalty program.

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Warning Notifications:

For water use within the orange or red tiers of any water conservation stage, the following notification procedures will apply:

Orange: If water use falls within this range, a shareholder will not be provided notifications, a water restrictor may be applied to their service line, water may be shut off and excessive use fees assigned based upon GPD use above the mandatory use limit

Red: If water use falls within this range, a shareholder will not be provided notifications, a water restrictor may be applied, water will be shut off and excessive use fees assigned based upon GPD use above the mandatory use limit

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Water Restrictors:

A water restrictor may be applied to a shareholder's service line for water use within the yellow, orange or red tier of any water conservation stage. Attempt(s) will be made to notify a shareholder prior to the application of a restrictor on their service line.

Water Shut Off & Reconnect Fees:

Water may be shut off for water use within the orange tier of any water conservation stage and will be shut off for water use within the red tier of any water conservation stage. In the event of a shut off, attempt(s) to notify the shareholder will be made prior to water being shut off.

The shareholder will be responsible for excessive use penalty fees and will be required to pay a \$75.00 reconnection fee. If a reconnection is requested to be completed outside of normal business hours, the fee shall be \$150.00.

Threatening Water Use:

At the discretion of the General or Operations Manager, water use that may be threatening the community's water supply, FLMWC equipment, FLMWC or shareholder property and/or the safety of an individual(s) may be temporarily shut off to mitigate risks without advance notice to shareholders.

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Excessive Use Fees:

Excessive Usage Statement and Penalty Fees will be based on the current published conservation stage and mandatory use limits and will be billed per the Board-approved overage penalty program below:

- 1 to 50 gallons per day above water conservation stage and tier at \$.025 per gallon
- 51 to 100 gallons per day above water conservation stage and tier at \$.05 per gallon
- 101 to 750 gallons per day above water conservation stage and tier at \$.10 per gallon
- 751 and above water conservation stage and tier at \$.20 per gallon

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Excessive Use appeal policy and procedure

A shareholder may request a reduction or waiver of charges incurred through an excessive use fee, or contest the excessive fee itself, by filling out an excessive use fee appeals form available on the FLMWC website here. <https://www.forestlakesfelton.com/water-conservation-c1756>

Appeals are submitted anonymously to the board of directors and taken up during the monthly board meetings in executive session.

Certain requirements must be met in order for an appeal to be **considered**:

- No more than one excessive use incident in the last 12 months.
- Shareholders must demonstrate what actions they took to remedy the cause of the excessive use incident.
- Excessive water use must not be intentional.

Excessive use appeals may or may not be approved at the discretion of the board of directors. If granted, an excessive use fee may be waived entirely or a one-time reduction may be approved.

Request for Additional Water Allowance

FLMWC Gallons Per Day (GPD) allowances are based on drought and rainfall conditions as well as industry and local water standards. However, FLMWC understands that in some instances, households may require the use of water above a current GPD limit, especially during times of drought.

For households larger than four people that require more water than allowed under current water policy and GPD limits, or for those with certain health conditions that require more water than allowed under the current GPD limit, an Additional Water Allowance Request Form may be filled out and submitted to the office. The form is located here: <https://www.forestlakesfelton.com/water-conservation-c1756>

During the monthly board meeting. The FLMWC board of directors will, at their discretion approve or deny the request based on information supplied.