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## Fall 2019 Conservation Newsletter

Arizona, Nevada and Mexico will be required to take less water from the Colorado River for the first time next year under the Lower Basin Drought Contingency Plan (DCP) agreement. The goal is to keep enough water in Lake Mead to reduce the risk of drastic cuts in the future. Last year, the federal government and states that take water from the lower Colorado agreed to reduce their allocation for 2020. DCP for the Colorado River Basin replaces the old plan which would trigger deep mandatory cuts when the Lake Mead water level dropped below an elevation of 1,075 feet.

The new plan, effective January 2020, requires Arizona to voluntarily reduce its draw from the Colorado River by 192,000 acre-feet or 62.6 billion gallons. An acre-foot equals approximately 326,000 gallons, enough to provide one year of water for 5 average Tonto Hills households. The monthly average for the community (5,200 gallons).

The farming industry will absorb the entire reduction from the states allocation. No communities will be affected by this initial reduction. If this historic drought continues, further conservation efforts and more severe reductions are likely. The various water authorities have adopted this plan to at least delay large reductions for at least three to five years. These needed conservation efforts will become the norm, not the exception. Each water provider and water user must take responsibility and engage in concerted water conservation efforts.

The average household in Tonto Hills uses approximately 5,300 gallons per month. Check this number against your usage. The THDWID Board emphasizes that, based on current projections, at full build out the Tonto Hills water allocation will be about 7,000 to 7,500 gallons per household per month. We need to be mindful there is no longer an unlimited supply of water and the need to reduce water use will become extremely important in the future (see the discussion on our website at: [THDWID Supply & Demand](https://www.tontohillswater.org/file/document-page/2115572071/M3YGqjRQvHuQ5efr.pdf)).

Since its formation, THDWID has regularly sent newsletters giving customers tips on how to conserve water. As required by law, THDWID has a conservation plan. You can find it at;

<https://www.tontohillswater.org/file/document-page/2115572071/M3YGqjRQvHuQ5efr.pdf>.

The plan has four stages for drought response. At the highest level, restrictions include a mandatory reduction of 10% for each household and a significant increase in the highest user rate. Let's begin to conserve now so we have done all we can to prevent the activation of these severe restrictions.

Residential water leaks are the highest cause of water loss (unused water). A quick check can determine if you have a leak. Turn your water off at all the faucets and auto-fill fixtures in and around your property, and check the meter. If the meter is turning, you have a leak. Check the THDWID web page to find companies listed for leak detection.

Pools are a great addition to property values and a life style, but they use a great deal of water because of evaporation. Pool owners may want to investigate the benefits of pool covers as a conservation method. Covers significantly reduce the amount of pool evaporation. A Tonto Hills property owner, with one of the larger pools in the community, has an average monthly usage of only 4,288 gallons. They say their saving on water costs more than covers the cost of maintaining and replacement of their pool cover.

Sincerely,  
Rick Nelson  
THDWID Chairperson