

**Buckhorn Valley Metropolitan District No. 1**  
**Water Conservation Policy**  
**May 5 Revision, 2026**

**Purpose:**

In order to meet water demands during typical or severe weather conditions and to meet the demands of the full-buildout of the community, the Buckhorn Valley Metropolitan District No. 1 “BVMD” or “the District” adopts the following Water Conservation policies, as detailed below, along with recommended future improvements to the District’s irrigation system. The District is responsible for providing non-potable irrigation water that serves the Buckhorn Valley community. The Town of Gypsum (Town) provides potable water to homes for indoor use. Town water policies differ from the District’s policies.

Water supply consultants have calculated that by restricting lawn areas (defined as spray-irrigated turf grass, not drip-irrigated areas, for example vegetable gardens) on future single-family lots to a maximum of 2,500 square feet, the District will have enough water to meet full-buildout water demands, even during periods of severe drought. That notwithstanding, in light of recent and likely future drought occurrences compromising the District’s water availability for irrigation purposes, and to ensure that all the residents in the District’s service area have sufficient water to irrigate their lawns in an overall effort to conserve water in the future, and to prevent overwatering practices, the District is compelled to implement the following conservation policies:

**Policies**

**1. Lawn area restriction-**

- a. All future developed single-family lots may not have lawn areas any larger than 2,500 square feet.
- b. Multi-family lawn areas will remain limited to 1,200 square feet per unit.
- c. All other development areas with growth potential will have lawn areas and billing rates which are proportional to single family areas, referred to as units of Single Family Lot Equivalents (SFEs).

**2. Irrigated Turf/Lawn watering schedules (including Parks, Open Spaces and Common areas maintained by commercial or residential customers)-**

**a. Normal Schedule-**

- 1) Lawn watering days will normally follow a general “every other day schedule”, which is to be Monday, Wednesday and Friday.
- 2) Watering times are to be only between the hours of 12:00 am to 10:00 am and 6:00 pm to 11:59 pm on each of the watering days.
- 3) This watering schedule has been shown to promote heartier and healthier sod that is more resistant to dry conditions such as exist in Gypsum by forcing the sod to develop a deeper and healthier root system.
- 4) This schedule will allow two non-watering weekdays for the District staff to make any needed repairs to the system.

- 5) Lawn watering should be suspended during high wind days, rain, or snow or other weather conditions that would impede watering efficacy or replace irrigation water.
- 6) **Trees, shrubs, and perennial, annuals plantings, vegetable/fruit/herb gardens and community gardens, may be watered on any day using low-volume, dripline, or non-spray irrigation methods from the District's water supply (not the Town's).**

**b. Drought Schedule-**

- 1) During a declared **Drought**, watering will be reduced to two days per week, on Tuesdays and Fridays, with watering times only between the hours of 12:00 am to 10:00 am and 6:00 pm to 11:59 pm on each of the watering days.
- 2) No new lawns (spray-irrigated turf areas) may be installed during a declared **Drought**.
- 3) Lawn watering should be suspended during high wind days, rain, or snow or other weather conditions that would impede watering efficacy or replace irrigation water.
- 4) **Trees, shrubs, and perennial, annuals plantings, vegetable/fruit/herb gardens and community gardens, may be watered on any day using low-volume, dripline irrigation methods from the District's water supply (not the Town's).**

**c. Severe Drought Schedule-**

- 1) During a declared **Severe Drought**, watering will be reduced to one day per week with watering times only between the hours of 12:00 am to 10:00 am and 6:00 pm to 11:59 pm on the one watering day.
- 2) No new lawns may be installed during a declared **Severe Drought**.
- 3) Lawn watering should be suspended during high wind days, rain, or snow or other weather conditions that would impede watering efficacy or replace irrigation water.
- 4) **Trees, shrubs, and perennial, annuals plantings, vegetable/fruit/herb gardens and community gardens, may be watered on any day using low-volume, dripline irrigation methods from the District's water supply (not the Town's).**

**d. Exceptions-**

- 1) Exceptions to the normal watering schedule days will be granted upon application to and approval of the District Manager for either installation of new lawns for a maximum two-week period, or for testing, reasonable maintenance or repairs to the system.
- 2) No exceptions will be granted for new spray-irrigated turfgrass lawn installation during declared **Drought** or **Severe Drought** periods.
- 3) Watering times for new lawns shall only be 12:00 am to 10:00 am and 6:00 pm to 11:59 pm.
- 4) Watering times for testing, repairs and maintenance may occur outside the normal watering times.

- 5) Grass species for new lawns are encouraged to be low water use types, and proper soil amendments and preparation are required, as recommended by the Colorado State University "CSU Extension" offices for the Gypsum area. These types of lawns may not require the same amount of water for health and can be watered less often than allowed in defined schedules.
- 6) Rain barrel collection and use is allowable per current Colorado State Law (see Recommendations section 4. below).

**e. System Shutdown-**

- 1) During major weather events such as wind, rain or following significant snow events, the District reserves the right to shut the irrigation system down temporarily until conditions warrant turning the system back on.
- 2) The District reserves the right to shut the irrigation system down temporarily for other emergency purposes and/or repairs.

**3. Irrigation zone run times for all watering schedules-**

- a. **Pop-up spray heads-** zone run times should be limited to 10 minutes.
- b. **Low-impact impulse sprinklers-** zone run times should be limited to 30 minutes.
- c. **Drip systems-** zone run times should be limited to 30 minutes.
- d. **Control systems-**
  - i. All new irrigation systems shall be equipped with electronic irrigation control systems.
  - ii. All existing District customers are encouraged to install electronic irrigation controls, if they do not already have one.

**4. Irrigation of Trees and Shrubs-**

- a. Irrigation of trees and shrubs may occur on assigned watering days and times via drip systems. See Section 3 for run times.
- b. No hand watering of trees and shrubs is allowed at any time.
- c. No hand watering of turfgrass lawn areas is allowed at any time.

**5. Enforcement-**

- a. **Customers-** The District's customers shall be responsible for complying with these irrigation restrictions, whether owner or occupant. Rates for irrigation water are not metered; the rate for each SFE is the cost for system operation and delivery, not the cost of volumetric metered water delivered to the property. These fixed costs are paid from the base rate. These expenses are for ongoing District utility costs and system maintenance.
- b. **Penalties-** Notices and Penalties are not imposed for operational budgetary purposes, but to elicit compliance by District customers as and "Irrigation Recovery Fee." Collected fees will be utilized at the discretion of the Board, which may be dedicated toward water-conservation projects or water augmentation for the benefit of customers:
  - 1) For a first violation, the owner or occupant will be advised in writing and informed that a monetary charge will be added to the water bill for subsequent violations.

- 2) For a second violation, the owner or occupant will be advised in writing and a \$250 charge will be added to the property's water bill.
- 3) For a third violation at the same premises, the owner or occupant will be advised in writing and a \$500 charge will be added to the property's water bill.
- 4) For a fourth violation at the same premises, the owner or occupant will be advised in writing and a \$1,000 charge will be added to the property's water bill.
- 5) All violations shall have the right to be appealed in front of the District Board.
- 6) Violations may be investigated by District staff and reported to the Board for implementation of penalties.

### Definitions

1. **Declaration of a Drought/Severe Drought-** The District's Board of Directors reserves the right to declare a Drought/Severe Drought.
2. **Factors for consideration in declaration of Drought/Severe Drought-** The District Board's determination may include, but not be limited to, consideration of the following factors: river and ditch flows, calls on the river and ditches, reservoir levels, physical river levels for allowance of/ability to pump water, the amount of water being used, the area of usage, a water usage model, fire/wildfire or other emergency situations, and other means to project the probability of water supply left at any time during the water year. Based on the projections of availability and other factors that the District's Board may consider, provided by consultants and water sources at any point in the irrigation season, the District may declare a **Drought** or **Severe Drought**. Imposition of conservation measures by the Colorado River Water Conservation District and the Town of Gypsum may also influence this determination.

### Recommendations

1. **Additional Turfgrass Management Recommendations-**
  - 1) Homeowners, renters and HOAs should consult with the CSU Extension and other resources periodically to determine the correct amount of water that is needed on their turfgrass lawns for the atmospheric conditions in their specific area and set their irrigation controllers accordingly.
  - 2) The CSU Extension should be consulted to learn and implement mowing frequencies and turf lengths most appropriate for their area to effectuate responsible water conservation practices.
  - 3) When installing new lawns, drought resistant and low water-use lawn grass species should be utilized. The CSU Extension should be consulted to determine those species.
  - 4) Consider installing rain-barrels and/or drip irrigation to water non-turf areas or native turf. A small amount of rain can yield significant water for these uses (for example, 1/8" of rain on a 2,000 square foot roof can yield 155 gallons of water for irrigation use). The State of Colorado, under Statute 37-96.5-103, allows collection precipitation from a residential

rooftop for residential lawn and garden irrigation, if no more than two rain barrels with a combined storage capacity of one-hundred ten gallons or less are utilized. Please refer to the full State statute to confirm if your home is eligible.

- 5) Additional considerations related to fire-wise landscaping plant selections, defensible space around structures and other fire prevention measures are available to the community via the District and fire protection services Provider websites

## **2. Installation of District Flow Meters Recommendation-**

- 1) As soon as practicable, to aid in monitoring water flows to customers, the District should install mainline flow meters where appropriate with remote readout and transmittal of flow-rates to a central dispatch facility/internet site to monitor the amount of flow going through the system to:
  - a. Determine if there is watering or water loss occurring during shut-down periods and if so, how much?
  - b. Make a determination on how much water should be used on watering days based on weather station ET information, and the square footage of existing lawns that should need watering.
- 2) As soon as practicable, to aid in knowing how much water should be applied at any given time, the District should install a weather station that will monitor evaporation and precipitation rates. Information on how much watering should occur may be passed on to the District's customers, so that they can adjust the zone run times on their irrigation systems.

**May be amended from time to time:**

**Adopted on \_\_\_\_\_, 2026**