

PRESS RELEASE

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
TUESDAY, AUGUST 26, 2008**

RIVANNA WATER & SEWER AUTHORITY ABNORMALLY DRY CONDITIONS BEING CLOSELY MONITORED

Charlottesville, VA (Tuesday, August 26, 2008) – The Rivanna Water & Sewer Authority (RWSA) responded to questions about dry outdoor conditions today by stating that the risk to the water supply is not yet significant enough to declare a drought, but conditions continue to be very closely monitored.

“We use state-of-the-art hydrologic computer modeling to provide the best glimpse we can at the probability of what might be ahead,” stated Mr. Tom Frederick, Executive Director of the Authority. “This year, the rainfall in May, June, and early July helped maintain storage in our reservoirs, storage we are now using to get through a very dry August. Our computer model benchmarks current reservoir levels, but then looks forward 12 weeks. It currently sees fall just around the horizon, with cooler temperatures and vegetation soon going dormant for winter – suggesting a high probability that relief will come before reservoir levels get critically low.”

The most recent model results completed yesterday concluded that the current probability of reservoir storage being below 80% full twelve weeks into the future is 12%. This compares to a probability of 7% on August 1 and 10% on August 15, suggesting the risk is slowly rising. “Our benchmark for seeking a drought watch declaration is a 20% probability,” stated Mr. Frederick, “so the indication is that we are not there yet.”

“However,” Mr. Frederick continued, “we are reminded despite technology that nobody has a perfect crystal ball when it comes to predicting weather. There are simply no guarantees, so we will remain diligent in monitoring this situation.”

Ms. Tamara Ambler, the Authority’s Water Resources Manager, added “given that weather patterns are not as predictable as we would like, it remains important that our citizens pay attention to how they use water and practice good conservation habits every day. Urban water use has recently risen above 12 million gallons per day, which is about 30% higher than average winter water use – suggesting there is plenty of opportunity to consider how to avoid unnecessary water use.”

While the Authority’s primary responsibility is to the sustainability of the public water system through reservoirs, their analysis can also be revealing about groundwater supply. “The biggest water news story today is about groundwater,” Mr. Frederick stated. “Stream flows are dropping more rapidly this year during periods without rainfall in comparison to the past two years, which tells us that groundwater recharge to streams is critically low. We believe groundwater recharge in Albemarle County is now at its lowest levels since 2002. Households dependent on well

water should be most especially mindful of the opportunity to conserve as much water as possible during this period.”

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