



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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**CITY ORDERS WATER CONSERVATION; WAIVES CERTAIN
FEES FOR REPAIRS FROM WINTER STORM**

(February 19, 2021) Today the Mayor and City Manager of the City of Waco took steps to ensure protection of our water system as we recover from the winter storm of the past week. These steps are necessary because our water supply remains critically low.

While rising temperatures are welcomed for residents and businesses, rising temperatures will thaw water pipes and reveal new leaks which must be valved off and repaired. From a water system standpoint, these new leaks will drain the water system further.

While we do not expect shutting off the water throughout the entire city, a community-wide boil water notice is imminent if demand doesn't change. This demand is being caused by leaks around the city and high usage. The City of Waco is pumping twice our normal daily usage and the system's storage is sitting at a critically low capacity.

If the system conditions worsen, some areas may not have water at all, depending on water system pressures and elevation. If system conditions worsen further, the fire department could not have adequate water for firefighting. Our staff continues to develop alternative methods of fire protection, but water is the critical resource to protect property in the event of a fire.

To help preserve our water system storage, action is required.

Mayor Meek has signed an emergency declaration which takes the following actions regarding the water system:

1. All cleaning/dyeing and laundry plants, commercial laundry (self-serve commercial), and automobile car washing establishments in the City are required to cease all operations and activities until noon on Monday, February 22, 2021.
2. All other commercial and residential customers are urged to reduce water consumption and to not hoard water. Each person is urged to keep water use to not more than one gallon per person per day, and not more than one gallon per day for cooking for the household.

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City Manager Bradley Ford, acting under his authority within the City's Water Conservation Plan, has issued an order requiring the City's top industrial water users to submit and obtain approval of a water consumption plan prior to conducting any business. City of Waco Water Utility staff will contact these users immediately. These water consumption plans will be submitted to the City's Water Utility Services Department for prompt evaluation and response. Approvals will be granted by City Manager Ford. City Manager Ford has also directed each of the cities who purchase water from the City of Waco to require water consumption plans for their top industrial users.

In recognition of the impacts to local residents and businesses from this storm, Mayor Meek's emergency declaration waives certain permit and inspection fees for the repair of damages caused by the winter storm. Permits and inspections are still required.

The emergency declaration also permits residents to place additional bagged trash at the curb. Additionally, the declaration suspends the requirement for tree limbs to be cut and stacked into 4'x4'x4' piles, which allows for tree limbs to be cut and placed at the curb for future pick-up.

The past week has been difficult for all residents of Waco. Mayor Meek, members of the City Council and City Manager Ford are grateful for the diligent effort our citizens and businesses have made to inspect their buildings, valve off leaks, and to report leaks around the City and encourage them to continue these great efforts over the coming days. We are nearing the end of this crisis and ask our residents and businesses to assist us over the coming days to reach full recovery.

City staff continue to deliver bottled water, generously donated by Coca Cola Bottling Company, to residents whose water has been valved off by the City for critical water main repairs and system preservation.

To report leaks or low water pressure please call 254-299-2489. To get further information on the details of either the Mayor's Emergency Declaration or City Manager Ford's order, please call 254-750-5970.

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