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City of Waco Mandatory Water Conservation Lifted

February 21, 2021 Like all of Texas, the City of Waco has endured a difficult week of severe winter weather.

Today, approximately 14 million Texans remain under a boil water notice. Many cities around the state issued boil water notices city wide of for large portions of their cities. The households in Waco that received a boil water notice did so solely to their water being turned off to repair a broken water main.

Restoring water service is a high priority for Utilities crews and our contractors in the coming days.

Had a city-wide boil water notice been issued during the height of the storm event when more than 40,000 households were without power, many Wacoans would not have been able to boil water for drinking. With roads mostly impassable and many stores closed, there would have been little access to drinking water which could have led to dehydration and other health challenges. In addition, to recover from a city-wide boil water notice would have taken days due to the sampling and testing required to ensure the water was drinkable.

Fortunately, Wacoans were able to avoid a city-wide boil water notice for a number of reasons:

- Strategic planning and investment in our Water system over many years which created significant water production capacity.
- Dedicated efforts by our residents and businesses during and after the winter storm to conserve water, report leaks, turn off leaking fire lines, etc.
- The commitment and dedication of our city employees—our Police and Fire Departments who assisted in locating leaks, turning off fire lines and, last but certainly not least, our Utilities employees and contractors who have repaired or are in the process of repairing more than 100 leaks across the City.

Thanks to these efforts, the City of Waco's Water System is at a less critical stage. There is ample water in the system for fire protection and for typical winter-time residential and commercial use.

We continue to identify leaks around the City and welcome the public's continued assistance in identifying leaks, checking their buildings and fire lines, and making the necessary repairs.

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Because of the improving condition of our water system, the City is taking the following actions.

First, the Mayor has revised his emergency order of Friday, February 19th, 2021 to allow for the following:

- All cleaning/dyeing and laundry plants, commercial laundry (self-serve commercial), and commercial car washing establishments in the City may open for business at 6:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 21, 2021.
- All residential customers and commercial customers may return to normal water usage immediately.

The second action is the continuation of water consumption plans for the City's top ten industrial water users. These plans were submitted by these water users and approved by the Director of Utilities and the City Manager and will remain in place until further notice. These restrictions were put in place by the City Manager under his authority within the City's Water Conservation Plan.

The City of Waco extends our deepest thanks to our residents and business community for uniting to address the critical challenges experienced with our Water System. Without your efforts, all of Waco would have been under a boil water notice for many days—or worse, without water at all.

Mayor Dillon Meek: “This is a moment for celebration. When many communities across Texas had to issue community wide boil water notices, Waco was able to keep the water flowing and avoid a community wide boil water notice. This is the result of a committed City staff and the community working together. I'm so proud of Waco. This was a difficult week and we have challenges days ahead but I know that Wacoans will continue to support each other because that is what we are all about.”

City Manager Bradley Ford: “I am immensely proud of our City staff that braved unprecedented circumstances to serve our citizens and keep the water flowing. It was a total team effort that I will remember with respect for many years to come.”

The City of Waco has created a webpage for more information on winter storm recovery efforts located at www.waco-texas.com/recovery. Residents and businesses are able to use the webpage to register as volunteers, find information about making a donation to support relief efforts, as well as request resources.

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