

2024 Drought Response Measures

With a higher-than-average risk of drought conditions persisting across the province this year, the Government of Alberta facilitated voluntary water sharing agreements, including one for the Bow River Basin, to help conserve water and reduce the risks posed by drought. The water sharing put in place for 2024 reflects the collaborative, practical and thoughtful approach to water management that we have seen in southern Alberta’s river basins for many years.

Depending on conditions in the Bow River Basin, Calgary is committed to implementing the drought response measures detailed below. Collectively, these actions could achieve a 5-10 per cent reduction in overall water use.

Be ready and stay informed

Monitor conditions and provide updates

Watershed conditions and drought indicators are monitored year-round and increase from mid-May to mid-September when there is an increased risk of drought.

Monthly updates are provided to the public on current drought conditions, how The City is responding and actions we need Calgarians to take.

Status: In progress

Regional coordination

Regional coordination and water sharing negotiation with other major water users in the Bow Basin.

Work with regional counterparts to share drought response tactics and align common messaging.

Status: In progress

Elevate water conservation efforts

City operations → leading by example

Some examples include:

- Accelerating water loss reduction to detect and fix leaks.
- Running outdoor fountains on reduced schedules or turned off.
- Reducing outdoor watering of plants, flowers and grass.
- Reusing stormwater to water trees and some City golf courses.
- Adjusting mowing height to let turf grow longer to reduce watering.
- Limiting exterior washing of City vehicles, fire trucks and buses.
- Updating drought response plans across City operations.

Status: In progress

Public awareness campaigns

Encourage Calgarians to conserve water and use it wisely with a focus on:

- Drought awareness and indoor/water conservation - **Together we can make every drop count**
- Rain barrel sales and promotion
- Water leak detection and repair
- Waterwise gardening - **YardSmart**

Tactics include various ads (radio, YouTube, digital, television and social media), community and billboard signage, and public outreach at local events.

Status: In progress

Enact outdoor water restrictions

Mandatory reduction in outdoor water use

Depending on the conditions and severity of the water shortage, there are four stages of mandatory outdoor water restrictions.

These restrictions place limitations on how and when water can be used outdoors. They are in accordance with the Water Utility Bylaw 40M2006.

Restrictions apply to Calgary residences, businesses, customers and City operations.

Status: Ready to implement, when needed