



## Department of Health

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Governor

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Commissioner

**SALLY DRESLIN, M.S., R.N.**  
Executive Deputy Commissioner

August 11, 2016

Dear Public Water Supplier:

As you may be aware, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYS DEC) issued a Drought Watch for the state of New York on July 15, 2016. On August 3, 2016 the NYS DEC upgraded this situation to a Drought Warning for the western portions of New York State including your area (see: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/press/107222.html>). These advisories reflect precipitation levels, reservoir/lake levels, stream flow, and groundwater levels.

In response to the Drought Warning, the New York State Department of Health is recommending that Public Water Suppliers (PWS) review their drought management plan to ensure that it is up-to-date and that it has clearly defined response actions and triggers for those actions. In addition, PWS should review their authority, be it local and/or in collaboration with its local government, to mandate and enforce, if necessary, water conservation measures. Other suggested activities PWS may consider include:

- Checking water sources and other facilities or indicators to determine the present status and sustainability of the water system;
- Implementing precautionary or response actions as appropriate;
- Confirming the readiness/availability of back-up water supply sources;
- Ensuring that interconnections and other essential infrastructure and hardware (e.g., valves, pumps) are operable;
- Expediting a leak detection-repair program to address major losses;
- Reviewing all PWS emergency contact information, including agencies and contractors, to ensure that these are current; and
- Discussing any concerns or potential issues with your local health department.

PWS should also continue to implement and encourage water conservation measures within the water system and in the community. Information and tips about Water Conservation are available on Page 19 of the document "Preparing Your Drinking Water Annual Water Quality Report: Guidance for Water Suppliers":

([http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/annual\\_water\\_quality\\_report/docs/guidance.pdf](http://www.health.ny.gov/environmental/water/drinking/annual_water_quality_report/docs/guidance.pdf)).

Additional helpful information and tips about water conservation are also available at: <http://www.dec.ny.gov/lands/5009.html>. Please consider providing such water saving tips to your water users.

If you have any questions, please contact your local health department or the Bureau of Water Supply Protection at (518) 402-7654.

Sincerely,

Roger C. Sokol, Ph.D.  
Director, Bureau of Water Supply Protection