

Update from the Town of Goldsby

In an attempt to be proactive instead of reactive, the Town of Goldsby is enacting odd/even restrictions on outside watering beginning June 1, 2024. We experienced a critical shortage of water multiple times last summer, mostly involving the west tower that serves the northwest area of town. We hope these steps can help prevent that situation from occurring this year: initiate the water rationing prior to the hottest part of summer, improve notice to water customers, and promoting a better understanding how each water customer can contribute to the success of the program. We will post notices at local businesses, place notices in the local newspaper, post notices on social media, and post a notice on the town website. We will be mailing out the water bill on orange colored cards; this will provide a visual reminder and include a reference to the water restrictions located on the town website.

The hot and dry summer weather results in a tremendous increase in daily water usage, primarily due to outside watering of lawns and filling swimming pools. This increase in demand drains the water tower faster than the current infrastructure can fill it. The end result is a water tower with a critically low level of water in it, and thus the tower is not able to deliver adequate water volume or water pressure to residents. Low water pressure is definitely an inconvenience, but more importantly, low water pressure is a critical safety issue because the system is not able to provide the water necessary to fight a house fire or wild fire.

This will give you a quantitative look at the problem the summer high demand causes. A water tower is what produces the water pressure in a municipal system, the higher the level of water is in the tower, the more water pressure you have at the faucet. Our west water tower has a total capacity of 300,000 gallons. The current 8" water line is able to deliver between 500,000 to 575,000 gallons per day to the west tower when the system is running at maximum capacity. During the high demand summer days – we see peak daily water usage that exceeds 600,000 gallons per day. For comparison, the winter months of November/December are the low demand months - we see an average daily water usage of about 300,000 gallons per day. The current infrastructure is not able to provide an adequate volume of water to the west tower to meet the needs of those high demand days. The system can tolerate only a few back-to-back high demand days before the water level in the tower is reduced to a critically low level.

The odd/even water rationing can be an effective tool to decrease daily water usage, because it cuts the number of lawns being watered or swimming pools being filled by half on any given day. But this tool is only as good as the cooperation and compliance provided by our water customers. We ask for your understanding of the situation, and we ask for your cooperation by adhering to the odd/even outside water rationing; for the good of all concerned. If you see someone has forgotten about the water rationing program, please remind them; or call our office and we will remind them. It will take all of us cooperating this summer to avoid the water crisis we experienced last year. We have purchased a remote meter reading system that will allow real-time remote monitoring of water meters. The system will be up and running soon, it has the capability to set individual meter usage alerts and will allow the office folks to oversee compliance of the odd/even water rationing. We hope everyone will understand the situation and follow the restrictions, but if necessary, we will issue citations to repeat offenders.

What are we doing to fix this deficiency in the water infrastructure?

The problem is actually very simple, the original 8” water line installed many years ago that carries water from the treatment plant to the west tower town is just too small to carry enough water to meet the hot summer daily demands. The town is currently working on a \$1.4 million dollar project that will help mitigate our water infrastructure problem. We are installing a 12” water line that will complete a loop in the system. This loop will provide a complete path for water to be pumped to the west tower from the water treatment plant through a 12” water line. This will be in addition to the original 8” water line that will remain in place. The engineering for the project is complete, the project request has been submitted to the state for approval, hopefully the project will go out for bid in the next couple weeks, and then construction can begin. This project will likely not be completed until after summer, so it will not help us during this high demand season.

This 12” water line loop should help to mitigate our summer problems for a couple years, but as Goldsby continues to grow, the demand will soon exceed the infrastructure again. There are two large residential housing developments that were approved by the previous town board in 2022 and prior. The construction of new houses just in these two subdivisions will likely add an additional 240 customers to the 1,443 currently on the system. There is also considerable commercial development occurring in Goldsby that requires additional water supply.

The long term solution suggested by the engineers is to install an 18” water line from the treatment plant to the west tower. We will start initial planning on that project as soon as the current 12” project is complete. The 18” water line project is estimated to cost over \$5 million dollars and may take 3-4 years to complete.

The Town of Goldsby must focus on balancing the future growth rate to a level the water infrastructure can support! We are currently behind this curve and it will be very difficult and very costly to catch up over the next few years

Respectfully,

Mike Herrin
Mayor – Town of Goldsby