

# Town of Glastonbury Drought Communications Plan 2021

*(To be reviewed no less than every 3 years)*

*Reviewed and revised by Wendy Mis, Glastonbury Director of Health, Kathryn Paquette, Marketing & Communications Manager, Lisa Zerio, Glastonbury Parks & Recreation Director, and Dave Sacchitella, Building Superintendent on April 7, 2021*

Glastonbury property owners receive their water through private wells and water provided by the Manchester Water Company and Metropolitan District of CT (MDC). The Town’s communication policy regarding water levels and drought conditions is guided by best practices for private well users and guidelines provided by Manchester Water Company and MDC. The Glastonbury Drought Communications Policy is designed to keep the community apprised of low water levels and drought conditions, and to educate property owners on water conservation best practices.

## Drought Definition

A drought is a prolonged period of abnormally low precipitation, often combined with abnormally high evaporation that adversely affects the water resources of a given geographic area. It is not typically a distinct event that has a clearly defined beginning and end (such as a storm); nor does it affect all water resources or users equally. According to Victor Miguel Ponce of San Diego University, “drought is more than a physical phenomenon or natural event. Its impact results from the relationship between a natural event and demands on the water supply, and it is often exacerbated by human activities.”<sup>1</sup>

## Objectives

1. Maintain effective and timely communications with the Glastonbury community as it pertains to water supply and drought conditions, including both voluntary and mandatory restrictions.
2. Ensure local residents and businesses are informed of low water volumes and drought conditions in the local drinking water bodies.
3. Promote and advocate water conservation activities among Glastonbury property owners.
4. Leverage effective platforms to relay water supply levels, drought conditions, water conservation resources, and Town water conservation efforts to the public.

## Audience

Glastonbury property owners, including local farmers and businesses. Local interest groups include, but are not limited to, the CT River Valley Chamber of Commerce, Agricultural Advisory Committee, and the Conservation Commission/Inland Wetlands & Watercourses Agency.

## Communication Platforms

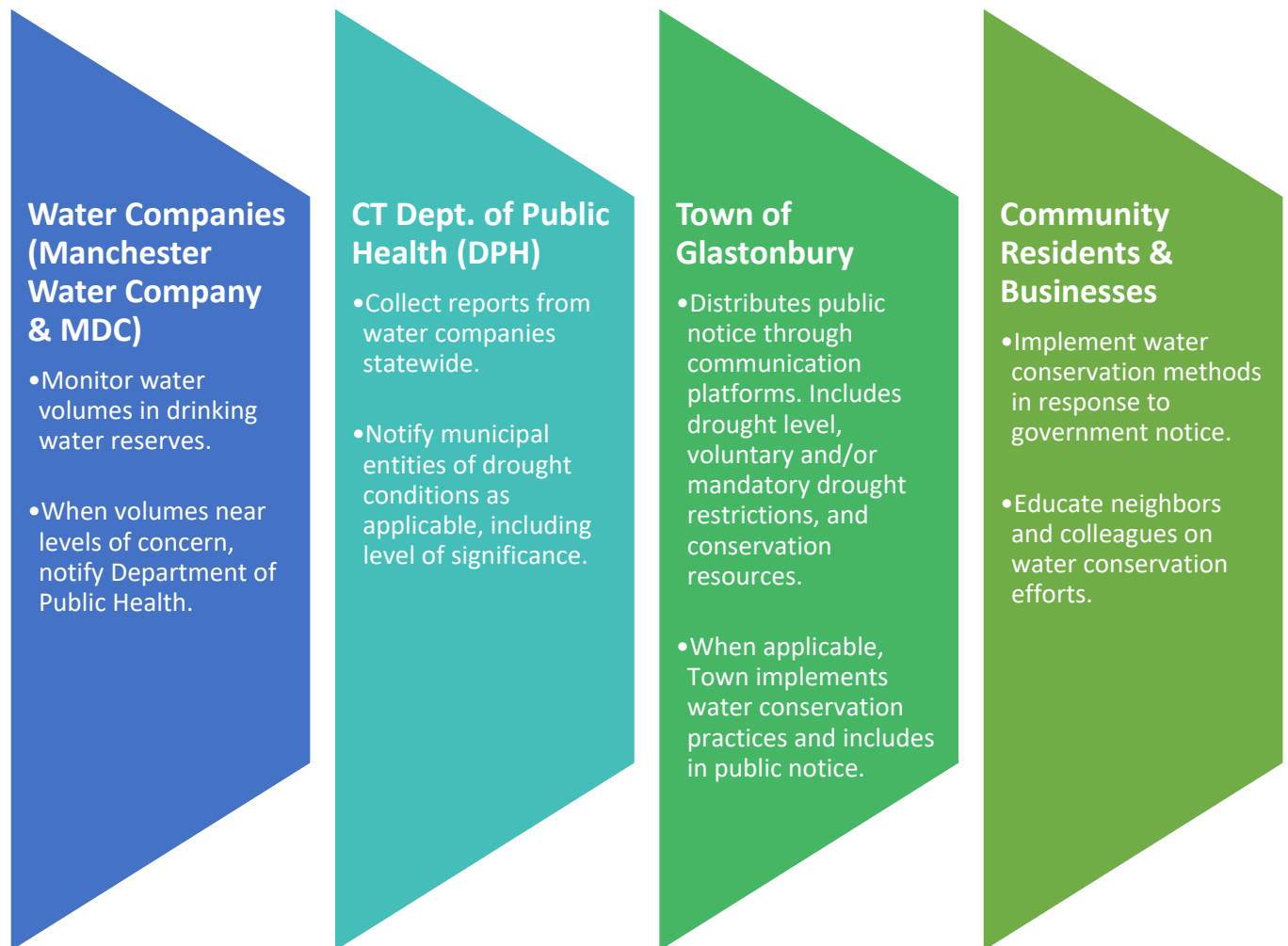
- Town website – News section, dedicated website pages/resources, and community spotlight on homepage
- Monthly newsletters and timely eNotifications (Subscription-based email notification system)
- Facebook – Town-managed pages and community group pages

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<sup>1</sup> Sources: <https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/Water/Drought/20181106statedroughtplanadopted.pdf> and [http://ponce.sdsu.edu/three\\_issues\\_droughtfacts01.html](http://ponce.sdsu.edu/three_issues_droughtfacts01.html)

- Local Media Outlets – Glastonbury Citizen, Courant, CT River Valley Chamber of Commerce, The Scoop, Glastonbury Newcomers and Neighbors
- Mailers and Public Reports (E.g. summer tax bill mailings, annual reports)
- Direct mailers (drought conditions only) – For use in emergency situations only
- Everbridge – Reverse 911 notification system– For use in emergency situations only

## Process and Players



Drinking water sources in Hartford County are managed by several companies who evaluate and report on their respective water volume and conditions on an ongoing basis. When water volumes are low, the water companies relay the information to the CT Department of Public Health (DPH), who in turn, communicates water level status to the local governments. The Glastonbury Health Department receives such updates from the CT DPH, and forwards to the Town of Glastonbury Marketing & Communication Manager (MCM). Upon receipt of such information, the MCM disseminates the current water conditions, water conservation resources, and voluntary and/or mandatory drought restrictions through the Town website, eNotification (email) system, and Facebook. Notices are also distributed to the local media outlets including the Glastonbury Citizen, Hartford Courant, CT River Valley Chamber of

Commerce, and others as needed. When drought conditions and/or mandatory drought restrictions exist, additional platforms may be used to ensure all residents are apprised of the water supply status. Updates are continuously relayed to the public through this process as they become available and a dedicated website page is established for a summary of how the situation has progressed or changed between the time the Town received its initial notice, and the date of the most recent update. This process continues until the Town receives notice that water availability has returned to desired levels, and/or any mandatory or voluntary drought restrictions have been lifted. At that time, the MCM distributes a final update, notifying the public of the resolved status. In addition to these situational updates, Glastonbury maintains a number of water conservation resources on their website, which are updated by staff from the office of Community Development and others as needed.

## **Municipal Water Conservation Practices**

Glastonbury has a number of processes in place to conserve water, minimize usage, and leverage natural rain fall for Town operations when and where possible. The Glastonbury Parks & Recreation and Facilities Maintenance Departments actively monitor water usage on a monthly basis to reduce usage and identify potential areas for further conservation. A variety of water usage management tools are used by both departments including: rain sensors to disable systems when sufficient rainfall occurs, remotely controlled irrigation systems, and a variety of sensors, digital controls, and water restrictors to reduce usage and eliminate unintentional use in facility boilers, landscaping activities, restrooms, and kitchens. When a drought advisory is issued, water use for irrigation is reduced and activities that require water is discontinued, (e.g. washing Town vehicles).

In addition to the efforts mentioned above, the Glastonbury Refuse Department hosts an annual Rain Barrel and Compost Bin sales and pickup event for residents, which includes water conservation education and promotion activities. The Town Marketing & Communications Manager also promotes water conservation periodically throughout the Town social media pages for ongoing education.

## **Public Drought Resources**

- [CT Department of Public Health Drinking Water Division](#)
- [CT Department of Energy and Environmental Protection \(DEEP\)](#)
- Town Website – <http://www.glastonburyct.gov>
- [Town of Glastonbury Plan of Conservation and Development](#)\*
- Agricultural Advisory Committee and Conservation Commission/Inland Wetlands Agency
- Glastonbury Health Department Staff
- Glastonbury Community Development Staff

*\* The POCD was last updated in 2018 for a 10 year planning period*

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## Municipal Website Information – Hyperlinks and Screenshots

The Town has a dedicated page on its website titled “Water Conservation and Drought” where it lists drought resources and posts drought advisories and guidance as applicable. [Please click here to view the web page.](#) A screenshot of the page is also provided below per SCT request (see first screenshot below).

The Town also has a web page dedicated to Utilities, which is available here: [Utility Services | Glastonbury, CT \(glastonburyct.gov\)](#). See second screenshot below.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Glastonbury website with the following items: GLASTONBURY CONNECTICUT SINCE 1633, OUR COMMUNITY, DEPARTMENTS, I WANT TO..., BUSINESS, a search icon, and an accessibility icon. The left sidebar menu includes: ABOUT US (expanded), Awards & Recognition, Town Government, Community Profile, Energy Efficiency & Sustainability (expanded), Water Conservation and Drought (highlighted), Watershed Pledge, Glastonbury Goes Green Bulletins, PR & Communications, Town History, Welcome Letter from Town Manager, and Contact Us. The main content area is titled "Water Conservation and Drought" and includes a breadcrumb trail: "Our Community » About Us » Energy Efficiency & Sustainability »". The page content is divided into three sections: "Drought Resources" with information on statewide drought status and a link to the Connecticut Drought Information Center; "Water Conservation" with a definition and a link to a private well guidance document; and a paragraph from the DEEP department reporting on typical water usage (25 gallons for a shower, 30 gallons for dish washing) and providing simple ways to reduce water usage.

The screenshot shows the top navigation bar of the Glastonbury website with the following items: OUR COMMUNITY, DEPARTMENTS, I WANT TO..., BUSINESS, a search icon, and an accessibility icon. The left sidebar menu includes: ABOUT US, LOCAL ATTRACTIONS, RESIDENTS (expanded), Community Services, Energy Saving Resources, Glastonbury Community Action Partnership, Library Programs, New Resident Resources, Parks & Recreation Activities, Utility Services (highlighted), Youth Programs, and SERVICES. The main content area is titled "Utility Services" and includes a breadcrumb trail: "Our Community » Residents »". The page content includes a paragraph stating the page's purpose as a resource for utility service providers. It is organized into three sections: "Water" with a list of providers (Metropolitan District, Manchester Water Department, Well Water Information) and their contact numbers; "Electricity and Energy Savings" with a list of providers (Eversource, Neighbor to Neighbor Energy Challenge, Energy Saving Resources for Residents) and their contact numbers; and "Gas Service" with a list of providers (Connecticut Natural Gas) and their contact number.