

August 21, 2016

Board of Selectmen
90 South Main Street
Sharon, MA 02067

Dear Board members,

The Sharon Conservation Commission voted unanimously (5-0-0) at its meeting of August 18, 2016 to submit this letter requesting the Board of Selectmen as Water Commissioners to institute a complete ban on outside water use. The U.S. Geological Survey reports that Sharon has fluctuated between “severe” and “extreme” drought conditions which are creating detrimental impacts to surface and groundwater resources - a major concern of the Commission. An outdoor watering ban would be a critical, short-term method of helping to address this long-term issue.

It has come to our attention that your Board plans to implement such a ban as of your meeting on August 23, 2016. We support that action and would offer the following suggestions to be incorporated into the ban, if they have not been already:

- Include all lawn irrigation systems and sprinklers in the ban, with the exception of one hand-held hose or water can to be used only between the hours of 6PM and 6AM.
- Apply the ban uniformly to newly constructed lawns, residential, commercial and recreation uses, both private and town-owned, as well as to those residents with private wells.
- Exempt agricultural uses.
- Ensure the watering ban remain in effect until November 30, 2016.

When creating notices regarding the ban (SCTV, mailings, signage, web, etc.), remind residents and businesses about the importance of conserving water inside structures, and include links to Sharon’s existing water efficiency rebates and other water conservation programs. We also urge mindfulness of water usage generally, and the need to avoid activities that could start or spread fire.

To encourage compliance with the ban, a phone number should be available to which calls may be made to report violations. While the expectation would be cooperation from all water users, there should be fines imposed for those who do not comply.

We appreciate your attention to this important matter.

For the Commission,

Peg Arguimbau, Chair