



For Media Release

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For more information:
Deenise Becenti – 928-729-6221

NTUA REQUESTS VOLUNTARY WATER CONSERVATION PRACTICES FROM ALL NTUA WATER CUSTOMERS

FORT DEFIANCE, AZ – As drought conditions increase, the Navajo Tribal Utility Authority (NTUA) is requesting all water customers practice water conservation at homes and at businesses to avoid water system shortages.

NTUA's drought response is based on the water system's supply capacity during the summer months. The past ten winter and spring seasons did not produce the precipitation necessary to keep water sources adequately supplied in order for NTUA water tanks to operate at sufficient levels.

"We recently imposed water restrictions on our water loading stations. This has helped and tank levels have recovered, however we are just starting the summer season and anticipate more hot weather through July, August and even September," said NTUA Deputy General Manager Rex Kontz.

"Therefore, at this point, we are asking everyone to conserve water and hopefully we won't have to enact any tighter restrictions," he said. "Minimizing water use will avoid a crisis situation."

NTUA manages and operates the domestic, public water systems providing water for human consumption throughout the Navajo Nation. The Navajo Nation Water Resources department is in charge of livestock wells and windmills.

"We just want to make sure we have water available for all our customers and that our water supply remains steady for the remaining part of the summer," Kontz said, adding that NTUA would like to avoid implementing mandatory measures for further reducing water use.

NTUA has been monitoring pumping facilities and water tank levels in all ninety-four (94) of its water systems. Reports find that the domestic water well levels are not at satisfactory levels, prompting a request to the public to practice water conservation measures.

"When you have water running from the tap, it's easy to overlook water restrictions," Kontz said. "But when you start to notice little changes, such as water discoloration or decreased water pressure that could mean that the water level is close to the bottom of the water tanks. When that happens everyone will feel the impact."

Minimizing water use includes:

- Not washing parking lots or driveways
- No potable water for construction purposes or dust control
- Not watering lawns and gardens more than three times per week and then, only 5-9 a.m. and 5-9 p.m.
- No hauling more than 500 gallons per day of potable water for remote home cistern systems.

In homes:

- Check water faucets, toilets, and pipes for leaks - even a dripping faucet can add up to a lot of water loss.
- Turn off the water while brushing your teeth, rather than running a steady stream
- Take shorter showers.
- When washing dishes by hand, don't let the tap run freely to rinse.

NTUA has initiated its public awareness water conservation campaign theme called To'baa'haa'hasin, which means Water is Precious in the Navajo. The theme is in place with the hope of reminding the public of the cultural significance relating to water.

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NTUA asks water customers to conserve water



By Donovan Quintero | Jul 11, 2021 | News | ★★★★★

WINDOW ROCK - Navajo Tribal Utility Authority is asking its customers to get into the habit of conserving the water they pay for and use.

NTUA, the tribal utility enterprise that restricted the amount of water its water-loading stations could take, stated on Wednesday asking its consumers to get into the habit of conserving water.



Navajo Times | Donovan Quintero

A hose connects to a Navajo Tribal Utility Authority water-loading station through a chain-link fence on June 30 in Fort Defiance, Ariz. NTUA officials are asking their customers to conserve water. A week earlier, the enterprise issued a water restriction for water-loading station customers.

The reasons: drought and extreme weather events.

“We are asking everyone to conserve water and hopefully we won’t have to enact any tighter restrictions,” said Rex Kontz, deputy general manager for NTUA. “Minimizing water use will avoid a crisis situation.”

Kontz has a point.

While a few areas in the Navajo Nation received nearly an inch of rain, much of the reservation received less than half an inch of precipitation, despite some places getting a heavy downpour, according to data from the Colorado Basin River Forecast Center.

On June 27, water levels in some NTUA tanks dropped 2 feet, Kontz said, because some water-loading station customers are filling their 100- to 200-gallon water tanks repeatedly throughout the day. He said NTUA found one customer took 6,000 gallons of water in two days. The significant drop in water levels prompted the water restriction to be issued.

Kontz said the water-loading stations are connected to the main water supply that provides water to its other water customers with water piping. The over-usage by water-loading station customers caused the water pressure to homes and businesses to drop.

The restriction, Kontz said, has been helping tank levels to recover.

“However, we are just starting the summer season and anticipate more hot weather through July, August, and even September,” he said. “What people don’t understand is that the groundwater, where

you're pumping water out of the ground, that's recharge by snowfall. So, it soaks in slowly over time and that's what recharges them."

Kontz explained how wet monsoons play a role in resupplying groundwater.

"The monsoons would help by filling up local ponds and places where wildlife and livestock might water," he said. "It doesn't really help the groundwater and the supply for the community system. That's some kind of misunderstanding because we've had a long-term drought."

NTUA has approximately 39,000 customers and has 18 water-loading stations that serve an unknown number of additional customers who do not have access to a piped water system.

The tribal utility company provides water for communities along the San Juan River, from Fruitland, N.M. to Teec Nos Pos, Arizona. Those communities get water from the City of Farmington. The city issued a water shortage advisory and sent a letter to NTUA on May 27, informing them it would encourage its customers to reduce their water usage by 10%.

Chris Sypher, the community works director for the City of Farmington, said on June 7, the city uses up to 16 million gallons of water a day, and NTUA has access to up to 6 million gallons of water for its reservation customers during the summer.

According to the Navajo Department of Water Resource, the total consumption of drinking water is approximately more than 3.9 billion gallons annually. On average, water use on the reservation ranges from 10 gallons to 100 gallons a day. Neighboring border towns use up to 180 gallons a day. This means that water usage on the reservation would increase to 160 gallons a day, or 2.9 trillion gallons a day, by 2040.

Space-age technology

Raina Dre Silver from Hard Rock, Ariz., carries a 5-gallon jug she filled with water collected from the air that is held inside the Watergen on July 6 in Hard Rock.

The Watergen, which creates high-quality drinking water out of air, holds up to 50 gallons of water.

With water shortage becoming a potential concern in the future, space-age technology that captures water from the air is being developed. Watergen, a company based in Israel, recently brought its miracle water-generating machine to Hard Rock, Arizona, where it has been set up to demonstrate how it works.

The machine, which looks like a large square blue metal box, requires 208 volts of electricity. For the most part, the water-generating machine sits idle until it turns on, sounding like a refrigerator. It seems to be a promising solution to the tribe's water shortage woes.



Navajo Times | Donovan Quintero
Raina Dre Silver from Hard Rock, Ariz., carries a 5-gallon jug she filled with water collected from the air that is held inside the Watergen on July 6 in Hard Rock.

Executive Director for Tó Nizhóní Ání Nicole Horseherder, who helped bring the machine to Hard Rock, an isolated community, said the water-generating machine is not going to be a water-savior for Navajos.

“No, not at all. Watergen is only one solution. It’s only one solution to the problem of water,” Horseherder said, who is from Tsé bik’i na’astsxélé, about 15 miles northeast of Hard Rock. “In the bigger picture, it will not solve all the water issues.

“NTUA has not been able to solve all the water and that’s obvious. People should understand that one company like NTUA, that just so happens to be able to drill wells and deliver water to people—doesn’t mean that they have all the answers, and we shouldn’t look to them to solve all the problems.”

Kontz agreed and said technology like Watergen’s would not be enough to sustain a home and was suitable only for emergency purposes. His concern was more for conserving the water.



Navajo Times | Donovan Quintero
Raina Dre Silver from Hard Rock, Ariz., watches the water collected by space-age technology called Watergen, which creates high-quality drinking water out of air, on July 6 in Hard Rock. Silver

Water restrictions

During the pandemic in 2020, volunteer groups like Water Warriors and DigDeep used water from various water sources on the reservation, including NTUA water-loading stations.

Kontz said he had a meeting with DigDeep, which provides service to its water customers in the Dilkon area. Kontz said he and his colleagues at NTUA do not know who DigDeep and Water Warriors are providing water services to. He said both DigDeep and Water Warriors went as far as installing elevated tanks at peoples’ homes.

“We don’t know how many they’ve done and where they’re hauling their waters and we didn’t,” Kontz said. “We weren’t asked for input on it. So, we had no control over those individuals. And we cautioned, very heavily about not doing those types of systems in certain areas.”

Horseherder said the chapter has not yet begun enforcing the NTUA water restrictions. She said the chapter wanted more information and to clarify what it means before it starts implementing it.

“The clouds come in every day, and it doesn’t rain. It’s been very, very hard not to be able to plant corn,” Horseherder said. “It makes life extra hard. Right now, we’re in midday and it’s over 100 degrees. We’ve never experienced temperatures so high, it’s just amazing. It’s hard.”

NTUA manages and operates the domestic, public water systems providing water for human consumption throughout the Navajo Nation. The Navajo Nation Water Resources Department oversees livestock wells and windmills.

NTUA recommends minimizing water usage by not washing parking lots or driveways, using potable water for construction purposes, watering lawns or gardens less than three times per week, and hauling less than 500 gallons – of potable water for remote home cistern systems – per day.

NTUA also recommends homeowners check for leaky faucets, leaky toilets, turn off the water while brushing their teeth, and taking fewer or shorter showers.

Horseherder said water conservation was a “community effort.”

“We have to do our part to respond to the drought. If we have livestock, we need to cut back,” Horseherder said. “The other thing that we have to do at this time is we need to go out and start land restoration projects.”

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Tó baa hááhasin

Water is Precious



Every Drop Counts

Do your part to CONSERVE water by following these tips

-  Fix all water leaks in your home.
-  Take 5 minute or less showers or fill bath tub half way.
-  DO NOT use the toilet as a wastebasket.
-  Turn off the faucet when brushing teeth, washing hands, or shaving. This can save 3 to 7 gallons per minute.
-  Place a water-filled plastic jug in the toilet tank away from working parts, this will save water every time you flush.
-  Not washing parking lots or driveways
-  When landscaping yards - consider "Desert Landscaping" to reduce the need for water.
-  Wash full loads of laundry
-  Report any major water-line leaks to NTUA

Encourage others to CONSERVE WATER



NAVAJO TRIBAL UTILITY AUTHORITY



PUBLIC NOTICE

DUE TO DROUGHT CONDITIONS RESTRICTIONS - WATER LOADING STATIONS

The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority has issued water restrictions at NTUA water loading stations throughout the region. Recent data collected for these water loading stations show a high increase in volumes of water per load at the water loading stations. NTUA will be limiting single loads, weekly and monthly withdrawals.

Please be advised that these overuse increases have impacted the community's water supply, resulting in low water tank levels and reduced water pressure for homes and businesses. Therefore, NTUA is enacting restrictions for water loading stations.

A limit will be set on how many water cards are to be sold to customers in these communities. The hours these NTUA water loading stations will be open will vary and will be based on available water supply, please check with the local NTUA District Office to verify hours of operation.

The NTUA water station restrictions are outlined below:

- There will be a limit of 500 gallons per single load or 500 gallons per week and customers have a 2,000 gallons per month limit. This should allow for community customers to have adequate water supply to last them throughout the month, including those who are on water cistern systems.
- The water loading stations are for residential use only; there will be no hauling for livestock or for commercial use.
- Large water trucks or water tanks are prohibited from hauling, as this will result in a rapid depletion of water supply for the community.
- Any cardholder found to be exceeding the NTUA water station restrictions will have their card deactivated.

NTUA is respectfully requesting that these restrictions be observed and practiced.
Public understanding is appreciated. Thank you

Drought impacts NTUA issues water restrictions

BY DONOVAN QUINTERO
NAVAJO TIMES

WINDOW ROCK – People who rely on Navajo Tribal Utility Authority water-loading stations will see new rules to increase water conservation as the drought grows more serious.

NTUA on Sunday issued a notice of price increases and limits on amount of water taken at all NTUA water-loading stations throughout the Navajo Nation.

The water stations are accessed by those with water-station cards designed specifically for convenient purchases.

A customer pays \$4.59 for 1,000 gallons of potable water. The price will increase to \$7.11 per 1,000 gallons if a water hauler gets more than 3,000 gallons of water.

Some water-loading station tank levels have dropped below three feet, which prompted NTUA to move quickly, said Rex Koontz, deputy general manager of NTUA.

Koontz said some water-loading station cardholders have repeatedly filled 100- to 200-gallon tanks.

“The tanks got really low, affecting other customers in higher elevations,” Koontz said on Tuesday. “Some places have experienced really low pressure.”

Koontz said water-loading station users will now be required to take no more than 2,000 gallons per month, meaning the new restrictions will limit users to 500 gallons per single load or 500 gallons per week.

“This should allow for community customers to have adequate water supply to last them throughout the month,” according to a public notice issued by NTUA on June 29.

Koontz said the communities affected are Chilchinbeto, New Lands in Sanders, Dilkon and Cameron.

The overdrawing of water from the water stations is connected to NTUA customers who have running water in their homes. NTUA has around 38,000 to 39,000 water customers, said Koontz.

Though he isn’t certain the water taken from the watering stations is for livestock, Koontz reiterated that water taken at the water-loading stations is only for home use.

Cards could be deactivated

Koontz said NTUA crews are going to examine which water-loading stations have users drawing unnecessary amounts of water and they will “talk to them.”

Any cardholder found to be exceeding the water restrictions will have their card deactivated.

“We can look at cards – see who is using a lot of water – and

we are going to ask if they can downsize,” Koontz said.

The increased use of water from the watering stations has impacted Navajo communities that are tied into the same NTUA water lines.

The NTUA public notice suggests a limit will be set on how many water station cards are to be sold to customers in water station communities. The business hours of these NTUA water loading stations will vary and will be based on the available water supply.

For more information, NTUA is encouraging its water-station users to check with their local NTUA district office to verify hours of operation.

Koontz said the water restrictions will stay in place throughout the summer to prevent water from running too low or depleted. A bad winter season and hot weather conditions contribute to the water levels being stressed.

Koontz said NTUA monitors the monsoon and how much precipitation it brings to the Nation.

Koontz said NTUA could not determine if watering station users are hauling water for their livestock.

“The first step is trying to control it,” he said. “We don’t want to take more severe measures. The water is not meant for livestock.”

Reduce water use

While getting water from an NTUA water-loading station near the Fort Defiance Chapter House on Wednesday morning, a resident said it was a good idea that NTUA put a restriction on the water stations.

“I think it’s fair,” said the woman, who asked to remain anonymous. “Everybody would get their share because if only one person utilizes a lot more, then it’s not fair to those other ones.”

“We’re all in this together. We all need to work together and be fair to one another and share the water supply.”

The woman said before the water-loading station was installed last year, she retrieved her water from Sawmill, Arizona.

“I’ve been hauling water for a long time,” she added. “It is a way of life for a lot of people whether they know if it’s good water or not, they’re still going to haul it regardless.”

During the coronavirus pandemic last year, volunteer groups like Water Warriors and DigDeep utilized water from various water sources in

the Nation, including NTUA water-loading stations.

Koontz said he had a meeting with DigDeep, which provides service to its water customers in the Dilkon area.

“We are asking them to try to minimize what they are taking per load,” Koontz said. “We may be trying to serve too many clients at one time. Once you empty a system, no one has water.”

Local businesses like laundromats and car washes could be affected if the water shortage worsens, explained Koontz.

If it becomes worse, the watering stations could be shut off.

“Be conservative at home. Cut back on water usage,” he urged.

The pandemic also intensified the need for water in 2020, according to the Indian Health Service, which established and erected 58 transitional water points across the Nation using CARES Act funding.

The funding is supposed to last for two years or until the pandemic ends.

There are permanent water points that existed before COVID-19. They are managed by the chapter in which it is located or by NTUA.

With IHS’s CARES Act funding, there are permanent and transitional water points throughout the Nation where subsidized water is available for residents who live in homes with no piped water.

IHS identified four watering points that NTUA operates. Those water points are located in Cameron, Dilkon, Kayenta, and in Shiprock.

IHS also identified communities where an estimated 200 households don’t have piped water. Those communities are Cameron, Dilkon, Leupp, Navajo Mountain, Oljato-Monument Valley, Kayenta, Shonto, Chinle, Tsaile-Wheatfields, Houck, and Chichiltah.

These total at least 9,600 homes.

About 30% of the Navajo Nation lacks access to piped water service, according to the IHS. An estimated 37,000 people, or about 20% of the Navajo population, are without water.

On May 25, the city of Farmington issued a Stage 1 water shortage advisory because river levels are going low.

A letter was sent to NTUA on May 27, informing the utility of ongoing drought conditions and that the lack of snowpack from last winter prevented the city from replenishing the water supply. The advisory urged its customers to reduce water usage by 10%.

That advisory is in effect until further notice.



NTUA announces water restrictions

By Vida Volkert
Staff writer yvolkert@gallupindependent.com

FORT DEFIANCE, Ariz. — The Navajo Tribal Utility Authority on Sunday announced new restrictions at its water-loading stations across the Navajo Nation, effective immediately.

Restrictions include a limit of 500 gallons per single load or 500 gallons per week, and customers have a 2,000-gallon limit per month.

“Our primary concern is keeping the community water supply tanks at adequate levels,” NTUA Deputy General Manager Rex Kontz said. “The overuse of the water loading stations is resulting in low water tank levels and reduced water pressure for homes and businesses.”

The water loading stations are limited to residential use, and customers are not allowed to haul water for livestock or commercial use. In addition, water trucks or water tanks are prohibited from hauling. NTUA authorities warned that customers violating the restrictions will have their privilege revoked.

“These restrictions are necessary to keep water flowing to our communities,” Kontz said. “We ask that these restrictions be observed and practiced.”



WATER LOADING STATIONS

As a courtesy to the region, NTUA owns and operates regional water loading stations

1. The stations require key cards that can be purchased at NTUA District Offices in Kayenta, Shiprock, Tuba City, Dilkon, and Crownpoint.
2. The charge is the same rate as NTUA Tariff rate.
 - **\$4.59 per 1,000 gallons up to 3,000 gallons**
 - **Every 1,000 gallons over 3,000 is \$7.11**
 - **The cards will deduct only the number of gallons dispensed**
 - **Any remaining amount stays on the card until full gallon amount is depleted**
3. Once the card is activated, an individual may drive up to a watering station and swipe through a machine that will load the amount gallons of water on the card.
4. The card can be used at any NTUA watering location.



NTUA Watering Loading Station	Location	Hours of Operation
(New) Cameron, AZ	Chapter compound	Daily – 24 hour access
(New) Crownpoint, NM	NTUA District Office	Daily – 24 hour access
(New) Fort Defiance, AZ	FD Chapter compound	Daily – 24 hour access
(New) Kinlinchee, AZ	Chapter compound	Mon-Friday 8 am - 5pm
(New) Lower Greasewood, AZ	Near Chapter compound	Daily – 24 hour access
(New) Pueblo Pintado, NM	½ east of Tsegi High School	Daily – 24 hour access
(New) Whitecone, AZ	Chapter compound	Mon-Friday 8 am – 5 pm
Baca, NM	Within Baca Chapter Compound	Daily – 24 hour access
Rincon, NM	Outside by road near Church near Torreon	Daily – 24 hour access
White Horse Lake, NM	Within gateless Whitehorse Lake Chapter Compound	Daily – 24 hour access
Burnham, NM	Outside Burnham Chapter Compound	Daily – 24 hour access
Shiprock, NM – NTUA	Inside Shiprock District Compound	Daily – 24 hour access
Red Mesa, Utah	Outside Red Mesa District Compound	Daily – 24 hour access
Tuba City, AZ – NTUA	Outside Tuba City District Compound	Daily – 24 hour access
Coalmine, AZ	Outside Coalmine Chapter Compound	Daily – 24 hour access
Gray Mountain, AZ	Outside off road near Gray Mountain	Daily – 24 hour access
Dilkon, AZ – NTUA	Outside Dilkon District Compound	Daily – 24 hour access
Kayenta, AZ – NTUA	Outside Kayenta District Compound	Daily – 24 hour access

Livestock Watering Stations – Non-potable Water	
Chinle AZ	Next to Ferrell Gas Company in Chinle
Hunter’s Point, AZ	4 miles south on Route 12/264 intersection, east side of the Highway
Newcomb, NM	Route 192 near two water tanks
Sheepsprings, NM	2 miles west of Highway 491 on County Road 9680