



New Braunfels starts stricter water rules

Web Posted: 05/05/2006 12:00 AM CDT

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NEW BRAUNFELS — New year-round water use restrictions are set to go into effect for New Braunfels Utilities customers starting Monday.

Water customers will not be permitted to use a sprinkler for landscape watering between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. on any day. The current rules ban sprinklers between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m. The change is an Edwards Aquifer Authority mandate that requires Edwards Aquifer permit holders, including NBU, to expand the sprinkler ban.

But the utility is going beyond the authority mandates. Also starting Monday, charity car washes must be held at commercial car wash facilities and golf courses will not be allowed to use potable water to irrigate fairways and greens.

The rules will get tougher when the aquifer or Comal Springs flow drops below the point that triggers the Drought Management Plan. The aquifer is still about 15 feet above the trigger level and the spring flow is about 50 cubic feet per second above the trigger level.

"On a first violation, a warning letter will be sent to the violator," said utility spokeswoman Gretchen Reuwer. "The second violation results in \$25 being added onto their NBU bill. A third violation in a 12-month period is \$100 and a fourth violation in a 12-month period is \$300."

People who want to dispute the charge on their bill can go before an appeals panel, Reuwer said.

Starting in January, all automatic irrigation systems in the area will be required to have rainfall sensors installed, which keep the systems from turning on while it's raining.

NBU gets about 80 percent of its water from Canyon Lake, and it supplements its supply with Edwards Aquifer water.

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