

QUESTIONS ANSWERED WATER CONSERVATION BY-LAW # 07-069 (and Amendments)

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Overview:

Question: Why is it important to follow the Water Conservation By-law?

Answer: During summer months, water use can increase by up to 50% putting additional strain on our water supply and the infrastructure (water pumps, treatment plants) used to carry water to and from its destination. The Region of Waterloo Water Conservation By-law was implemented to help reduce water use peaks and limit the risk of an outdoor water use ban to lessen strain on our water supply and infrastructure.

Question: Can I use a hand-held watering can to water my garden when it's not my allowed watering day?

Answer: Yes. You can use buckets, barrels or cans that are not directly connected to the municipal water supply to water lawns and gardens at any time.

Question: Can I use a hose connected to the water supply or an irrigation system to water gardens, trees, shrubs and plants on my odd-even watering day?

Answer: Yes.

Question: If I have an automatic irrigation system that I can set to turn on in the middle of the night, can I apply for a permit to operate outside the normal restriction hours?

Answer: No. The entire community must conform to the limited hours on watering days, which include 5:30-10:00 a.m. and 7:00 - 11:00 p.m.

Question: Is the Region of Waterloo required to issue an official warning to me before it can charge me for violating the Water Conservation by-law restrictions?

Answer: No. Regional Police and By-Law Enforcement Officers may lay charges without warning. However, Region policy is to provide education, information and warning notices to property owners as a courtesy. If water use violations are observed after a warning has been issued, charges will be laid.

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Watering times:

Question: When can I water?

Answer: Water times are based on the last digit of your address number and the watering activity. All activities must be done within the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 10 a.m. and 7 p.m. and 11 p.m.

Lawn watering is permitted only once a week and other watering activities (watering of your garden, washing of car, topping of pool) can be done every other day (based on your address).

Lawn watering:

- Based on last digit of address number – see chart for your day of the week
- **Watering must take place** between the hours of **5:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.** and **7 p.m. and 11 p.m.**

Other watering activities:


- Based on last digit of address number; odd-numbered addresses water on odd-numbered days and even-numbered addresses water on even-numbered days.
- **Watering must take place** between the hours of **5:30 a.m. to 10 a.m.** and **7 p.m. and 11 p.m.**
- See chart below for example of watering days.

How to find your lawn watering day

If your address ends in:	
0 or 1	your watering day is: Monday
2 or 3	Tuesday
4 or 5	Wednesday
6 or 7	Thursday
8 or 9	Friday



5:30-10 a.m.
&
7-11 p.m.




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Other watering activities:

- Watering of gardens, trees, shrubs & other outdoor plants
- Washing of car with controlled hose (shut-off valve)
- Topping-up of permanent residential pools

Odd-numbered addresses water on odd-numbered days (5:30-10 a.m. and 7-11 p.m.)		Even-numbered addresses water on even-numbered days (5:30-10 a.m. and 7-11 p.m.)	
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Example only; not based on current calendar year:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

Request to change lawn watering day:

Question: Are residents who are away on their assigned lawn watering day able to water their lawns on an alternate day?

Answer: You may apply for a change in your lawn watering day. Applications will not be accepted until May 1 of the year they are applying for, and a limited number of permits will be available on a first come, first served basis. There is no waiting list. A \$10 administrative fee will be applied for each permit and a sticker will be issued which must be displayed in the front door or window of the property. The permit will only be valid for the year applied for. You must adhere to your new watering day. If you are found watering on your former watering day you will be fined without warning.

“Request to change watering day” application forms are available online at www.regionofwaterloo.ca/water or at the following Region of Waterloo locations:

Kitchener: 150 Frederick Street – Main Lobby, Citizen Service Desk

Waterloo: 99 Regina Street – Main Lobby, Citizen Service Desk

Cambridge: 150 Main Street – Citizen Service Desk

If however, you want to water on a different day occasionally, then no is the answer. Residents are only allowed to water according to the assigned day of their municipal address. The alternative is to hire a contractor or ask a friend to water their lawn for them during the approved times.

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Requests to extend watering times:

Question: How long can I water my lawn when applying nematodes?

Answer: First, you must register with the Region by calling 519-575-4400 or emailing watercycle@regionofwaterloo.ca. Provide your name, address, phone number and the date the application will occur. A permit is not required however proof of purchase must be available if requested by the Region. After applying the nematodes to your lawn, you can water for 24 hours following the application, and for 6 days following that between the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., and 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions for the nematodes. The short answer is that the lawn may be watered for up to 7 consecutive days following the application, and then the schedule reverts to the standard once per week.

Question: How long can I water newly planted sod or seed?

Answer: First, a permit must be requested from the Region by calling 519-575-4400. Your name, address, phone number, and the date the sod/seed is to be planted will be required. Once received, this permit must be posted in a visible location. New sod/seed may be watered for 24 hours following planting, and for 6 days following that between the hours of 5:30 a.m. and 10:00 a.m., and 7:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. and for an additional 7 days between the previous said hours on odd or even numbered calendar days based on the last digit of your address number i.e. if your address is even-numbered, then water on even days, if your address is an odd number, water on odd-numbered days. The short answer is that sod/seed may be watered for 7 consecutive days following planting, followed by a week of watering on alternating days and then the schedule reverts to the standard once per week.

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Swimming pools:

Question: Are public, municipal or communal pools like those shared by condominiums subject to the odd-even top-up restriction?

Answer: No. The alternate day top-up restriction applies only to private, residential swimming pools that are permanent.

Question: If I want to fill a portable pool or kids' wading pool, am I subject to any filling restrictions?

Answer: No. The top-up restriction is limited to permanently installed residential swimming pools.

Question: If I need to fill my swimming pool during the Water Conservation by-law restrictions following installation or after completing repairs, am I subject to the alternating day top-up restriction?

Answer: No. The current Water Conservation by-law restriction applies to top-ups only. Complete filling of pools is not restricted.

Question: If I have an above ground pool that is permanently installed with hardware and fixtures that remain in place all year, does the alternating day top-up rule apply?

Answer: Yes. This would be considered a permanent residential swimming pool.

Question: Can I backwash my pool and let the water run to the storm sewer during Water Conservation by-law restrictions?

Answer: No. Provincial regulations do not allow for chlorinated water to be discharged to storm sewers at anytime. The best alternatives are to backwash into a catchment system and de-chlorinate the water there or to allow it to run onto the lawn in a controlled setting.

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Washing of cars and other vehicles:

Question: Can I wash my car at any time on weekends?

Answer: No. Property owners may wash vehicles on alternate days (based on odd or even address) with time restrictions.

Question: Can business owners wash their business vehicles at their residences on days/times other than the days allowed for homeowners?

Answer: No. Business owners who believe they need to wash their vehicles to avoid loss of business must wash them on properties with enclosed washing facilities. The only days a business vehicle can be washed on a residential driveway, or on the street in front of the residential property, is during the alternate days per week allowed, during the specified a.m. / p.m. hours.

Question: Can I wash my car with a bucket during days other than my designated watering/washing day?

Answer: Yes, you may wash and rinse your vehicle with bucket loads of water at any time, but may only use a hose during your designated weekdays.

Question: Can I run a car wash event to raise funds for charitable purposes during Water Conservation by-law restrictions?

Answer: Yes, but we ask that you call the by-law hotline in advance to inform us of the event and the charity that the funds will be going to. This helps us in enforcement, and in responding to any complaints we may receive.

Wasting water:

Question: What is considered wasting water?

Answer: Wasting water anytime of the year is completely restricted. If you waste water or break the outdoor water use restrictions, you could be issued a fine by municipal by-law enforcement officers. Apartments, businesses, and other institutions are expected to comply with all outdoor water use regulations.

Wasting water includes:

- Permitting an irrigation system to run during a rainstorm;
- Permitting water to pool or run-off any lawn, garden, or other outside plant;
- Directing water onto a paved surface, including driveways, sidewalks, or roadways during irrigation;
- Operating a fountain or pond without re-circulating water;
- Washing any vehicle or the outside of a building with the use of a hose not equipped with a shut-off nozzle;
- Use of flowing water instead of dry sweeping to remove loose debris from a residential driveway.

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Additional questions:

Question: Can I wash my deck, house or driveway with a hose or power washer before applying treatments or paint?

Answer: Yes, washing once immediately prior to applying any paint or treatments is allowed. Weekly or regular washing and hosing of these areas, however, is not allowed.

Question: Can municipalities and core businesses water hanging flower pots on days other than designated?

Answer: Short answer is yes, but they should remain sensitive to public perception. It is recommended that watering trucks with non-potable water be used. In other words, the water used should be pumped from surface water sources, private wells and wastewater treatments plants (if approved).

Question: Is once-through water use for children's municipal play areas prohibited when the Water Conservation by-law is in effect?

Answer: No. Water use through sprinklers and fountains for children's recreation both in public and private areas are allowed when the Water Conservation by-law is in effect. It would be fine for parents to use small wading pools, but we do not encourage it.

Question: I am *not* connected to the municipal water supply, or use a private well or water source for lawn watering. Does the By-law apply to me?

Answer: People using water from sources not connected to the municipal water supply are exempt from the By-law. However, we encourage these property owners to be good environmental stewards and follow the water use restrictions.

Question: *Can* I drill my own well to avoid by-law restrictions?

Answer: Kitchener, Waterloo and Elmira currently have by-laws that prohibit private well drilling. Call your local municipality to ask about what the rules are for well drilling in your area.

Question: Does the watering by-law apply to residents using a Regionally operated community well, but are not connected to the Greenbrook pumping station?

Answer: Yes, all residents of the Regional Municipality of Waterloo must adhere to the watering by-law if they are connected to any Regional water system, including the small community systems operated by the Region.

Question: Are sports fields exempt from the watering schedule?

Answer: Municipal sports field watering is exempt from the Region of Waterloo Water Conservation By-law restrictions.

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Outdoor Watering Stage 1:

Question: When can I water outside the times (May 31 to September 30) the Water Conservation By-law is in effect?

Answer: The Outdoor Water Use Stage 1 is in effect from October 1 to May 30 of each year under normal water supply conditions for all residents, businesses and institutions. The responsibility for enforcing the by-law at this stage is up to each individual city and township, which all have dedicated help lines to answer questions and follow-up on inquiries from residents. Residents are encouraged to call the numbers listed below, depending on their location, if they have any questions about the rules at this stage.

Outdoor Water Use at this level is restricted as follows:

- **Lawns:** odd-even watering rule is in effect, with municipal time restrictions.
- **Wasting water:** Completely restricted ([click here for more information](#)).

Municipality	Website	Email	Contact number
Cambridge	www.cambridge.ca	bylaw@cambridge.ca	519-740-4613 ext. 4501
Kitchener	www.kitchenerutilities.ca	bylaw@kitchener.ca	519-741-2330
Waterloo	www.waterloo.ca	bylaw@waterloo.ca	519-747-8785
North Dumfries	www.northdumfries.ca	mail@township.northdumfries.ca	519-621-0340
Wellesley	www.township.wellesley.on.ca	aloch@township.wellesley.on.ca	519-699-4611
Wilmot	www.wilmot.ca	info@wilmot.ca	519-634-8444
Woolwich	www.woolwich.ca	Woolwich.mail@woolwich.ca	519-669-1647

Contact information:

For additional information on the Region of Waterloo Water Conservation By-law, please contact:

Region of Waterloo
150 Frederick Street, 7th Floor
Kitchener, ON N2G 4J3
By-law hotline: 519-575-4400
Fax: 519-575-4452
Email: watercycle@regionofwaterloo.ca
Web: www.regionofwaterloo.ca/water

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