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Update 4:30 PM

January 31, 2024

Mandatory ban on non-essential water use for Edmonton and Capital Region and update on water conservation results

Update – January 31, 2024

EPCOR continues repairs at the E.L. Smith Water Treatment Plant on the electrical feed system to the very large, 4000 horsepower, water distribution pumps that supply water to the storage reservoir system. Once repairs are complete, EPCOR will begin replenishing the reservoir system's water supply. Until the repairs and stabilization of the water network are complete, the mandatory ban on non-essential water use will stay in effect. The ban is anticipated to be lifted midday on Sunday, February 4.

Through the continued efforts of residents and businesses in the region we have seen water consumption drop from the typical daily winter average of 370 million litres per day to 335 million litres per day as of midday Wednesday, January 31. The ongoing conservation efforts by customers are helping to stabilize the water distribution network, and allow time for the complex repair work to be completed.

We recognize the effort and sacrifices that residents and businesses are making and we wish to extend our thanks to customers for supporting our staff and crews as they complete the necessary work to restore full supply levels to the water distribution network.

There continues to be no impact to quality of the drinking water. EPCOR continues to apply all of its technology and resources to ensuring water quality remains safe.

We continue to urge all customers to do everything they can to reduce non-essential water use until the ban is lifted and thank everyone who has reduced their usage and supported these efforts.

Background

On January 29, 2024, at approximately 2 a.m., there was an electrical failure in the distribution pumping equipment systems that move water from E.L. Smith Water Treatment Plant into the water distribution system. The Rossdale Water Treatment Plant remains operational; however, it cannot adequately supply the entire service area with normal water consumption demand.

There are four pumps in the E.L. Smith Plant system, two of which are now operational. The largest two pumps are still unavailable due to the electrical issue. To complete the cable replacement work safely, additional shutdowns of water deliveries from the plant will be required.

The mandatory ban on non-essential water use affects residents and business in Edmonton and surrounding communities supplied with EPCOR water, including Sherwood Park, St. Albert, Stony Plain, Spruce Grove, Leduc, Beaumont and Fort Saskatchewan.

Residents can help by continuing to do the following:

- Defer laundry or large uses of water such as filling hot tubs
- Use a small amount of dishes and wash them as efficiently as possible
- Take short showers rather than baths
- Don't run the water when brushing your teeth
- Discontinue flooding backyard ice rinks.

Until the E.L. Smith Water Treatment Plant returns to normal operations, customers may also experience low water pressure.

Future Utility Committee Reporting

EPCOR has been in contact with Utility Committee Chair Councillor Cartmell and the City Clerk's office, and filed a request that an agenda item be added to the March Utility Committee meeting. EPCOR will be conducting a post-incident review, and we expect to be able to provide a more detailed update to Utility Committee on the incident, the demand management measures, and resiliency planning, and to be available to respond to questions. EPCOR's teams remain focused on safely implementing timely repairs to the electrical systems at the E.L. Smith Water Treatment Plant, and returning the water system to full capacity.