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**Pennsylvania DEP Issues Statewide Drought Watches and Warnings
Water Department Outlines Water Conservation Measures**

PHILADELPHIA – The Philadelphia Water Department is reinforcing the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection’s (DEP) message and is calling on Philadelphians to conserve water. Philadelphia is one of the 24 counties included in the drought warning declared on September 16, 2010 by the state’s Drought Task Force. The drought warning designation asks residents to voluntarily reduce water usage by 10 – 15 percent.

Philadelphia’s reservoirs are currently filled to near capacity, which is normal. However, conservation is necessary now to avoid more serious shortages should drought conditions persist. Water Commissioner Bernard Brunwasser emphasizes, “Water is a limited, natural resource, and it is a resource that is shared. The amount of water we use in Philadelphia will have an impact on the region. It is necessary for Philadelphians to conserve water now to ensure there is an adequate supply for the future.”

The Philadelphia Water Department encourages citizens to practice the following water conservation measures:

- Run water only when you use it. Practice turning off the faucet between rinses while you brush your teeth or wash dishes.
- Take shorter showers. Use a timer to help keep to your limit.
- Use water-saving appliances like low-flow showerheads, faucets and toilets.
- Fix leaky faucets and running toilets.
- When using a dishwasher or laundry machine, save water and energy by always running a full load.
- Instead of dumping unconsumed water down the drain, water your houseplants with last night’s water glass or Rover’s leftover water bowl.
- Install a rain barrel at your home to catch rainwater for your use. Rainwater can be used to water lawns and gardens— and saves you money!
- During rain, avoid high water usage activities like washing dishes, flushing the toilet, showering and laundry. Avoiding these activities will lesson the load on the sewer system and alleviate overflows.

The majority of the Pennsylvania counties affected by the drought warning obtain all or portions of their drinking water from groundwater sources. The Delaware and Schuylkill rivers are Philadelphia’s drinking water sources and are surface water supplies. For the drought situation to improve, several periods of slow, steady, soaking rain are necessary to replenish underground water tables.

More drought information can be found online at www.depweb.state.pa.us, keyword: drought. Customers may also call the Water Department’s hotline at 215-685-6300.

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