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## Press Release

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<b>WATER USAGE SPIKES DUE TO HOT, DRY WEATHER</b>
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Lehigh County Authority customers are using more water than ever before this summer due to the hot, dry weather in this region. Since July 1, the Authority's customers in its Central Lehigh Division used an average of 10 million gallons of water per day. And on Tuesday, July 6, customers used a whopping 11 million gallons of water. The average-day usage over the past year has been only 6.5 million gallons per day.

What is driving water usage so high? The 4- to 5-million-gallon spike in water usage is attributed primarily to lawn-watering activities.

Industrial water users such as the Sam Adams Brewery and other beverage and food manufacturers located in western Lehigh County are continuing production at normal rates, with no significant increases over 2009 levels. The Authority's pump stations located in residential areas, however, have experienced pumping rates up to five times the normal level during the hottest days of the summer so far.

Late last year, the Authority completed two well-expansion projects to add water supply to the system to meet the peak demands that were predicted, and they are in full use this summer as the dry weather has made those predictions a reality.

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In addition, the Authority is working to complete the first phase of an interconnection with the City of Allentown, which will allow the Authority to purchase 2 million gallons of additional water supply from the City's Schantz Spring supply. This interconnection is scheduled to be completed in September.

In the meantime, the Authority's water supplies are adequate to meet customers' needs, but conservation practices are still encouraged. Not only does heavy lawn watering place a strain on local water utilities, their pump stations and other facilities, but it is also typically ineffective in maintaining a healthy lawn and can be quite expensive due to the resulting high water bill.

Some tips for maintaining a healthy lawn during the driest summer months include:

- Decide to go dormant – Lawns that go dormant and dry out for the summer are not dead and will be revived when cooler, wetter weather returns. Your lawn will actually suffer more if water is applied frequently during hot weather, because the lawn will go in and out of a dormant stage, creating additional stress on the plants. Allowing the lawn to stay dormant will help to ensure a healthy revival when cooler temperatures return.
- Do a deep soak, but not every day – If you are going to water your lawn, water deeply to allow for full penetration, but not more than once per week. Frequent shallow watering can promote shallow root penetration, which weakens the plant.
- Watch the forecast – If rain is predicted within the next few days, wait to see if it rains. Again, watering no more than once per week is recommended, so look ahead to see if nature will be providing any assistance.
- Avoid evaporation – Watering in the middle of the day is not effective. Due to the high heat and the amount of water that is lost through evaporation, your lawn will be unable to utilize the water. Instead, if you must water the lawn, consider evening or early morning hours.

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- Prioritize water uses for life-saving measures – Sensitive plants and gardens that need water to survive should be your top priority for outdoor water usage.
- Save new lawn seeding for cooler weather – Newly seeded lawns will not survive the summer’s heat, even with a lot of water. Plant new lawns in late summer or early fall instead.

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#### **Media Notes**

- All statements made in this press release may be attributed to Aurel Arndt, LCA’s general manager.
- LCA is a nonprofit municipal authority serving more than 19,000 water and sewer customers in 13 municipalities in Lehigh and Northampton counties. LCA provides municipal wastewater collection services to 10 municipalities in western Lehigh County and individual sewer service to roughly 1,700 customers in five municipalities. More information about LCA’s services is available at [www.lehighcountyauthority.org](http://www.lehighcountyauthority.org).