



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION
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CHRIS CHRISTIE
Governor

KIM GUADAGNO
Lt. Governor

BOB MARTIN
Commissioner

ADMINISTRATIVE ORDER NO. 2017-13

WHEREAS, under the Water Supply Management Act (Act), N.J.S.A. 58:1A-1 *et seq.*, and the Water Supply Allocation Permits rules at N.J.A.C. 7:19, adopted pursuant thereto, the New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection (Department) is responsible for managing the water resources of the State as public assets held in trust for all citizens and is authorized to manage the State's water supply and to plan for and respond to water supply emergencies, including drought; and

WHEREAS, N.J.A.C. 7:19-13.1(d) provides that the Department may call for specific action to reduce the possibility or lessen the impact of an impending water shortage; and

WHEREAS, from March through October 2016, precipitation measured 25-50 percent below average in the northern and central regions; and

WHEREAS, as of October 2016, sustained stream flows measured as low as 10 percent of the long term mean flow in the northern portions of the State of New Jersey; and

WHEREAS, as of October 2016, combined reservoir storage in the State's northeastern, central, and coastal north regions were between 13 and 25 percent below average; and

WHEREAS, on July 25, 2016, due to degraded water supply conditions, the Department issued a drought watch for the counties of Bergen, Essex, Hunterdon, Hudson, Mercer, Middlesex, Morris, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union, and Warren; and

WHEREAS, on October 5, 2016, the Department expanded the drought watch to include the counties of Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, Monmouth, Ocean, and Salem; and

WHEREAS, on October 21, 2016, due to the continued degradation of water supply conditions, the Department issued Administrative Order 2016-10, establishing a drought warning for the counties of Bergen, Essex, Hudson, Hunterdon, Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Morris, Ocean, Passaic, Somerset, Sussex, Union and Warren; and

WHEREAS, in attempt to increase and preserve storage in certain key reservoirs located within the drought warning areas, as part of the Administrative Order 2016-10, the Department modified nineteen water allocation permitted passing flows by lowering minimum flow and reservoir release requirements; and

WHEREAS, in an effort to preserve storage in reservoirs owned and operated by North Jersey District Water Supply Commission and Suez New Jersey, located within the drought warning areas, Administrative Order 2016-10 directed water transfers between key northeast purveyors; and

WHEREAS, between winter 2016 and spring 2017, the State experienced a return to more average rainfall, which contributed significantly to a reduction in the precipitation deficit seen through much of the spring, summer, and fall of 2016, restoration of more normal stream flows, and replenishment of water supply storage in critical northeastern and coastal north New Jersey reservoirs; and

WHEREAS, due to the replenishment of the northeastern New Jersey reservoirs, on February 7, 2017, the Assistant Commissioner for Water Resources Management, pursuant to his delegated authority, issued a directive lifting the water transfers directed by Administrative Order 2016-10; and

WHEREAS, because most of the State showed precipitation, reservoir, and stream flow recovery, while reservoir storage in the State's central region continued to be below the long-term average (i.e., between 20 – 25 percent below normal), I issued Administrative Order 2017-05 on April 12, 2017, lifting the Drought Warning designation and corresponding reduced passing flows in all counties except Hunterdon and Somerset Counties; and

WHEREAS, the State has experienced sufficient rainfall during the spring and summer 2017 that has contributed to the restoration of stream flows, unconfined groundwater levels, and reservoir levels across the State; and

WHEREAS, the combined total storage capacity of the central region reservoirs has recovered by more than 21 percent (from a low of 59.7 percent on November 28, 2016 to the current combined total of 81.03 percent), which is only approximately 10 percent below average for this time of year.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Bob Martin, Commissioner, pursuant to authority vested in me by the Water Supply Management Act (Act), N.J.S.A. 58:1A-1 *et seq.*, and the Water Supply Allocation Permits rules at N.J.A.C. 7:19, hereby ORDER and DIRECT as follows:

1. The Drought Warning declaration for the counties of Hunterdon and Somerset is terminated and the corresponding reduced passing flows in those counties are lifted.
2. All residents, businesses, and institutions in the State of New Jersey are encouraged to continue to use water sparingly. Tips for conservation can be found at www.njdrought.org.

Administrative Order 2016-10 signed on October 21, 2016, and Administrative Order 2017-05 signed on April 2, 2017, and all previous orders or portions thereof that are inconsistent with this Order are hereby superseded and repealed.

This order shall take effect immediately.

Date

8/11/2017


Bob Martin, Commissioner