



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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North Texas Municipal Water District Calls for Stage 1 Water Conservation Measures – Invasive Mussels Cause Water Shortage

MELISSA, TX – City officials have announced Stage 1 water conservation measures to go into effect April 19, 2011 and continue until further notice. Under Stage 1, residents are urged to conserve water, and the City will increase education efforts to reduce water and urge residents to detect leaks around the house.

The implementation of Stage 1 comes at the request of the North Texas Municipal Water District (NTMWD), the city's water supplier. NTMWD initiated the Stage 1 of the *NTMWD Water Conservation and Drought Contingency and Water Emergency Response Plan, March 2008*, because as a result of invasive zebra mussels being found in Lake Texoma and the temporary loss of the Lake Texoma raw water supply by NTMWD.

In August 2009, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department discovered zebra mussels in Sister Grove Creek, a tributary of the East Fork of the Trinity River and used by the NTMWD to transfer water from Lake Texoma. As a result, NTMWD voluntarily ceased pumping raw water supplies from Lake Texoma and has not resumed pumping. The infestation of zebra mussels in Lake Texoma has resulted in a loss of 22.5% of the NTMWD's total raw water supply.

"This is a complex environmental and conservation issue," said Jim Parks, NTMWD Executive Director. "It is the first time zebra mussels have been found in Texas and NTMWD is the only water supplier transferring water from Lake Texoma to the Trinity River basin. That's why water conservation efforts are so important. We are working on a solution so this does not become a bigger issue for other water sources in the state."

While zebra mussels are not harmful to humans, they do attach to water facilities and pipes causing millions of dollars in maintenance costs. NTMWD has stated they will continue to collaborate with federal and state regulatory agencies to develop a strategy to minimize the transport of zebra mussels into the Trinity River basin. Zebra mussels, which were first discovered in North America near the Great Lakes in 1988 are typically transferred from one river basin to another by boaters and anglers.

Residents are asked to voluntarily abide by the following restrictions: No watering between 10 a.m. and 6 p.m.; no over-watering such that a constant stream of water overflows from the lawn onto driveways, sidewalks or streets; and no watering during

rain. "Water conservation has always been important to the City of Melissa, however this situation has made it even a greater priority," stated City Administrator Jason Little.

An increased focus on conservation can result in savings on your water bill as well. Water efficient showerheads and aerators for faucets cost only a few dollars and can cut your water usage in half with no reduction in performance. Leaking faucets and toilets can waste thousands of gallons of water monthly, and are inexpensive to fix. A few small changes in your water-use habits can make a huge difference in water savings. In the summer, outdoor water use can account for 50% or more of total water use. With proper management, you can have a beautiful, healthy landscape and reduce your water use significantly.

At this point, NTMWD does not have a firm date for the resumption of pumping from Lake Texoma, however, NTMWD will continue to collaborate with the federal and state agencies to hopefully resume pumping in latter 2011.

"The City will continue to monitor the situation closely and when the measures are lifted, residents will be notified as quickly as possible," stated Mr. Little. In the meantime customers are encouraged to visit the City of Melissa Web Site at www.cityofmelissa.com for more information and other ways to conserve water in their household.

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