

New Braunfels prepares for stage 1 water restrictions

By Keri Heath The Herald-Zeitung | Posted: Saturday, March 24, 2018 12:00 am

New Braunfels residents should prepare for potential Stage 1 drought restrictions over the weekend, after the Edwards Aquifer water level dropped due to lack of rain.

On March 22, the J-17 well dropped to 662 feet, according to New Braunfels Utilities (NBU), which is only two feet above the 660 feet level, which triggers Stage 1 drought restrictions for the J-17 well.

If the well level falls below the 660 feet threshold and remains at that level for 24 hours, Stage 1 restrictions will be triggered. Restrictions last for 30 days, even if the aquifer level rises about 660 feet.

Pamela Quidley, manager of communications and external affairs at NBU, said the normal level for this time of year is 668.5 feet.

“(In) the spring, people start to plant grasses,” Quidley said. “We’re coming out of the fall where your grass is dormant and you’re not watering. So now everybody is kind of getting outside to fix their yards. Those kind of irrigation techniques put a lot of strain on the water.”

If Stage 1 is declared, customers served by NBU water will stay at these restrictions for 30 days.

Right now, there is no drought or restrictions for NBU customers.

Stage 1 restrictions limit the use of sprinklers or irrigation systems. If Stage 1 is triggered, residents in the city of New Braunfels will be limited to watering one day a week based on the number their address ends in.

Addresses ending in 0 or 1 can use irrigation systems on Monday, those ending in 2 and 3 on Tuesday, 4 and 5 on Wednesday, 6 and 7 on Thursday and 8 and 9 on Friday.

“Throughout the spring season, the demand for water typically increases as residents and businesses are preparing their lawns and gearing up for summer, NBU CEO Ian Taylor said. “Increased demand for water use, along with little rainfall are contributing factors to the Edwards Aquifer level.”

From Jan. 1 to Mar. 22, New Braunfels receive 2.05 inches of rain, according to data provided by NBU through waterunderground.com. During the same time last year, New Braunfels received 7.89 inches of rain. 2016 and 2015 saw 4.5 and 6.09 inches of rain respectively.

NBU regularly checks levels of the Edwards Aquifer wells. Quidley suggested people reduce water use on their lawns to help prevent aquifer levels from falling. More information on water restrictions can be found at nbutexas.com or by calling 830.608.8925.