



Energy and Environment Cabinet

For Immediate Release

**Contact: Chris
Yeary, Division of
Water, 502-545-
3580**

MAGOFFIN ISSUED WATER SHORTAGE WARNING

Water shortage watch extended

(FRANKFORT, Ky.) Sept. 26, 2008 -- The Division of Water (DOW) has issued a water shortage warning for Magoffin County in eastern Kentucky due to critically low water levels in the Licking River.

A water shortage warning is issued when one or more water supply systems in an area have entered the emergency phase of water shortage. A critically low water level in the Licking River at Salyersville is threatening the ability of Salyersville Municipal Water to supply its customers, including the Magoffin County Water District, its largest wholesale customer.

DOW is also expanding a water shortage watch originally issued for Harlan and Letcher counties to include all or portions of Breathitt, Clay, Knott, Leslie, Owsley and Perry counties. The water shortage watch includes those citizens relying on underground mines and wells for water. A water shortage watch is issued when drought conditions have the potential to threaten the normal availability of drinking water supply sources.

DOW officials study rainfall amounts, reservoir levels, streamflows, the Palmer Drought Index and the Drought Monitor when determining drought status. Moderate to severe drought conditions are in place for portions of eastern Kentucky as a result of the rainfall deficit. Annual precipitation is 83 percent of normal for the Eastern Climatic Division and the 30- and 60-day precipitation totals are 48 and 60 percent of normal, respectively.

Drought conditions are not limited to the watch and warning areas. The 30-day precipitation totals for the Western, Central and Bluegrass climatic divisions range from 30 to 40 percent of normal. However, annual rainfall amounts have been normal or above-normal, and the majority of water sources in these areas are large rivers, lakes and deep aquifers. As such, the potential for water shortages remains low in these areas.

Because September and October are typically the driest months of the year in Kentucky, residents should be aware of the increasing potential for water shortages, especially in the water shortage watch/warning areas. Citizens in the watch and warning areas are encouraged to adhere to all requests made by their local water supplier to help reduce demand for water. They are encouraged to limit car washing and outdoor watering, avoid hosing down patios and driveways and limit use of clothes washers and dishwashers.

The Kentucky Division of Emergency Management (KYEM) is monitoring the water shortage situation in the affected counties.

“I have been in touch with the Governor’s office regarding this issue,” said KYEM Director Gen. John W. Heltzel. “We have and will continue to coordinate any support necessary to return services to normal as soon as possible for these communities.”

For more information on drought conditions, water availability and conservation tips, visit the Division of Water’s drought Web site at

<http://www.water.ky.gov/wateruse/drought/>