



**Barton Springs
Edwards Aquifer**
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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Aquifer District Notifies Class A Conditional Edwards Permit Holders of Possible Permit Reclassification and Deeper Curtailments

The Barton Springs 10-day average discharge has fallen below 17 cubic feet per second (cfs) based on field measurements and the correlation of measured flow with Lovelady Monitor Well water levels. While 17 cfs is not a drought trigger threshold, it does prompt notification of a possible permit reclassification in the near future. In the coming days, the District will notify Class A Conditional Edwards permit holders of the possibility of permanent permit reclassification should aquifer conditions continue to decline and Stage IV Exceptional Drought is declared.

A rule change amendment adopted by the Board of Directors in March of 2011 added provisions that would permanently convert certain Class A Conditional permits to Class B Conditional permits upon a declaration of Stage IV Exceptional Drought. This means that reclassified permits will be subject to greater pumping curtailments in earlier stages of drought. The conversion rules were developed after significant public input and a rigorous stakeholder review process focused on equitable and efficient management of the District's groundwater resources during drought.

Class A Conditional permits include multiple use types. The permit reclassification does not affect non-exempt domestic use types, since groundwater is the only water supply available for those users. However, for the majority of the remaining use types, the District rules and Conditional Permit provisions require permit holders to be prepared to completely cease pumping and replace essential water demand during extreme drought as a condition of the permit. The District has 20 Class A Conditional permits representing approximately 158,000,000 gallons (0.7 cfs) that will be permanently reclassified if Stage IV Exceptional Drought is declared.

Current projections of aquifer conditions suggest that drought triggers may reach or fall below Stage IV Exceptional Drought thresholds towards the end of the year. Should the District declare Stage IV Exceptional Drought, Class A Conditional permits will be permanently reclassified as Class B Conditional Edwards permits, and curtailments that are associated with a Class B Conditional permit will take effect immediately. Class B Conditional permit holders must curtail pumping by 50% in Stage II Alarm Drought; 75% in Stage III Critical Drought; and 100% in Stage IV Exceptional Drought and in an Emergency Response Period.

As drought conditions persist, the District is providing this advance notice so that these Class A Conditional permit holders can make necessary preparations for alternative water supplies if they have not already done so.

BSEACD is a groundwater conservation district charged by the Texas Legislature to preserve, conserve, and protect the aquifers and groundwater resources within its jurisdiction, which includes parts of three Central Texas counties. It is governed by a Board of five elected directors and staffed with hydrogeologists, groundwater regulatory compliance specialists, environmental educators, geospatial systems specialists, and administrative support personnel.

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