



**Barton Springs  
Edwards Aquifer**  
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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## **Aquifer District Warns of Possible Entry into Stage IV Exceptional Drought**

The Barton Springs 30-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. The 30-day average of 17 cfs or less is not a drought trigger threshold, but rather it is an indicator that water levels and springflow in the District are extraordinarily low and that water supplies could be adversely affected.

Current projections of aquifer conditions suggest that the aquifer may reach or fall below the Stage IV Exceptional Drought thresholds (a Barton Springs 10-day average of 14 cfs; a Lovelady Monitor Well water level of 457.1 ft above mean sea level) as early as December 2013. On September 12, 2013, the 10-day average flow at Barton Springs was 15 cfs, and the water level at the Lovelady Monitor Well was 458.3 feet above mean sea level; this is 1 cfs and 1.2 ft above the respective Stage IV drought triggers.

With lack of significant rainfall and continued pumping, water levels could drop to the extent that some wells could go dry, and flow from Barton Springs could eventually decrease to the point where ecological, recreational, and aesthetic uses of Barton Springs would be harmed. The aquifer can no longer afford anything other than minimal use for essential needs.

"Central Texas has received a few small rain events but none have generated enough runoff to fill the lakes or the aquifers. Our permittees and groundwater users have done a commendable job of cutting back so far, but we're approaching unprecedented aquifer conditions that may warrant extraordinary measures to maintain springflows and prevent wells from going dry. Continued and increased water conservation by all groundwater users is essential to help extend area groundwater supplies," noted John Dupnik, District General Manager.

The District is providing advance notice to all permittees in the Fresh Edwards Management Zones, of the possible declaration of Stage IV Exceptional Drought. Historical and Non-Exempt Domestic use permit holders would see a 40% reduction in allowable pumping and Conditional permit holders will be subject to additional and substantial curtailments in use. During Stage IV Exceptional Drought all Fresh Edwards permittees will be encouraged to supplement supplies with alternative sources, if available, to reduce actual pumping as much as practicable.

The District asks all of its constituents to continue their water conservation measures and be even better stewards of an increasingly scarce resource. A list of actions to save water in and around the home or office and information on current aquifer conditions are available on the District's website at [www.bseacd.org](http://www.bseacd.org).

*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.*