



**Barton Springs
Edwards Aquifer**
CONSERVATION DISTRICT

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AQUIFER DISTRICT EASES DROUGHT RESTRICTIONS

The Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District has been in a very restrictive Critical Stage drought for about 10 months. Water use was curtailed by 30%, and outdoor uses such as lawn watering were prohibited. The groundwater users in the District finally received a little bit of good news today when it was announced that the recent rains had increased recharge and sufficiently improved aquifer conditions such that Critical Stage Drought was no longer indicated. At its meeting Thursday night, the Board of Directors changed the declaration to the next less restrictive stage, Alarm Stage drought, to be in effect immediately. Under Alarm Stage drought, users are still mandated to reduce their monthly water use by at least 20% from their authorized amounts, but it does allow some small amount of outdoor water use.

“The local groundwater drought is not over,” noted Kirk Holland, the District’s General Manager, “but we finally received enough rain in the right places to start having some effective replenishment of the aquifer. However, all our groundwater users need to continue to conserve water and use it wisely in order for the higher water levels in the aquifer to be sustained.” Holland expressed some hope that the El Nino climatological conditions would continue to bring the local rains that support creek flows so that in the near future the drought might eventually be completely broken and the restrictions lifted. “We aren’t there yet. But that would be a welcome relief for our groundwater users who have borne the brunt of water use restrictions for two summers and whose demand-reduction efforts have been successful in preserving the water supply for themselves and others,” he said.

The Barton Springs/Edwards Aquifer Conservation District provides scientific, educational, and regulatory programs involved in managing the groundwater resources that serve more than 50,000 people, schools, businesses, industries, and organizations in southern Travis, northern Hays, and western Caldwell and Bastrop Counties.

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