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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

## **Newton City Council approves Governor's request for mandatory water restrictions**

**NEWTON, NC (October 17, 2007)** -- At the October 16 meeting, the Newton City Council voted unanimously to continue the city's voluntary water conservation efforts, and in addition, to include the following mandatory restrictions as requested by Governor Mike Easley: 1) Stop watering lawns and shrubbery at homes and businesses. 2) Do not wash down houses, driveways, or sidewalks (non-commercial). 3) Do not wash your car (except at commercial car-wash facilities). 4) Restaurants should only serve water when patrons ask.

Catawba County, along with 55 other counties in North Carolina, is experiencing an "Exceptional Drought," which is the worst level of designation.

The Jacob Fork River, from which Newton draws its water, is flowing at 12 million gallons per day. According to the city's water shortage response policy, voluntary water restrictions would begin at 8 MGD, with mandatory restrictions at 6 MGD. Due to Governor Easley's request, the Newton City Council thought it proper to enact the above four mandatory restrictions, which will become effective Monday, October 22, at 8:00 a.m.

The penalty schedule for violations is as follows: First Offense – warning only; Second Offense - \$50 fine; Third Offense - \$100 fine; Fourth Offense - \$250 fine; Fifth Offense – disconnection of water service.

Newton Mayor Robert A. Mullinax stated that the mandatory restrictions are by no means a punishment for Newton's water customers, as consumption has decreased approximately 20 percent since voluntary restrictions were implemented. Water usage has reduced to a daily average of about 3.4 MGD.

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