



To: Mayor and Town Council Members

From: Mark C. Meyers, Town Manager

Date: September 10, 2026

Subject: Water Shortage Contingency Plan

Background

Last year the Washington County Water Conservancy District developed a water shortage contingency plan which was adopted by Town Council. The plan provides a system for prioritizing drinking water under diminished supply. It includes mitigation measures, drought monitoring identification of shortage stages, response actions, vulnerability assessment operational framework, and an update process.

If the District declares a shortage condition, water budgets will be issued to municipalities based on the shortage response target (e.g., -10% to -60% use). Importantly, member municipalities will be responsible for initiating a response plan to ensure operation within the water budget (and avoid a financial penalty). The district is now requesting that municipalities adopt water contingency plans to use as guides to address shortage conditions.

Attached is a draft local water shortage contingency plan. The plan uses the District's guidance found in the overall plan which will ensure consistent action and language should implementing the plan become necessary.

The plan was discussed at August 12, 2026, work meeting, August 18, 2026, regular meeting and September 9, 2026, work meeting. Based on direction from Town Council, the plan has been revised as follows: 1) a communication plan has been added, 2) reference to stage rate structures has been omitted, 3) limits on pools, new connections and implementation of ultra water efficiency standards have been omitted, and 4) references to items that do not relate to Virgin including golf courses, splash pads and water parks have been omitted.

The plan should be used as an educational effort encouraging voluntary compliance. If the plan was implemented, we could gauge compliance and take the additional step of introducing stage rates, limiting pool size, limiting connections and/or requiring ultra water efficiency standards at later.

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the Town Council adopt the Water Shortage Contingency Plan and at the September 15, 2026, regular meeting. The plan will provide local guidance if/when the Washington County Water Conservancy District Board of Trustees declares a shortage condition.

VIRGIN, UTAH
Resolution No. R2026-

**A RESOLUTION OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF VIRGIN TOWN, UTAH, ADOPTING THE
VIRGIN TOWN WATER SHORTAGE CONTINGENCY PLAN**

WHEREAS, the Town Council of Virgin Town recognizes the importance of protecting the Town's water supply and ensuring the continued availability of safe drinking water; and

WHEREAS, drought, changing water conditions, and emergency situations may require the Town to implement water conservation measures; and

WHEREAS, the Town has prepared a Water Shortage Contingency Plan pursuant to Washington County Water Conservancy's direction and guidance that establishes conservation stages and water use restrictions to help manage the Town's water resources during periods of shortage;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL OF VIRGIN, UTAH, THAT:.

1. The Virgin Town Water Shortage Contingency Plan, attached as Exhibit A, is hereby adopted as the official Water Shortage Contingency Plan for Virgin Town.
2. The Mayor, Town Manager, Public Works Director, Water Superintendent or their designee is authorized to implement the appropriate conservation stage identified in the Plan when conditions warrant and to take the actions necessary to carry out the Plan.
3. The Town Council may amend the Water Shortage Contingency Plan by resolution as needed.
4. This Resolution shall take effect immediately upon its adoption.

PASSED AND ADOPTED by the Town Council of Virgin, Utah, this 15 Day of September, 2026.

By: _____

Jean Krause, Mayor

Attest: _____

Krystal Percival, Town Clerk/Recorder

<u>Vote</u>	<u>Aye</u>	<u>Nay</u>	<u>Abstain</u>
Jean Krause, Mayor	☐	☐	☐
Paul Luwe, Council Member	☐	☐	☐
Valerie Wenz, Council Member	☐	☐	☐
April McKeon, Council Member	☐	☐	☐
Jim Kietzman, Council Member	☐	☐	☐

RECORDED this _____ day of _____ 2026

PUBLISHED or POSTED this _____ day of _____, 2026.

Resolution R2026-
Adopted: September 15, 2026

CERTIFICATE OF PASSAGE AND PUBLICATION OR POSTING

In accordance with Utah Code Annotated §63G-30-102 as amended, I, the Town Clerk/Recorder of Virgin, Utah, hereby certifies that the foregoing Ordinance was duly passed and published or posted via Class A Notice at:

- 1) Utah Public Notice website
- 2) Virgin Town website, www.virgin.utah.gov
- 3) Virgin Town Hall

Krystal Percival, Town Clerk/Recorder
Virgin Town, Utah

Virgin Town, Utah

Water Shortage Contingency Plan

1. Purpose

To ensure the continued availability of safe drinking water during periods of drought, infrastructure limitations, or emergency disruption by establishing clear conservation stages, enforcement actions, and alternative supply strategies.

2. Water System Overview (Context)

The Town of Virgin relies primarily on:

- Water run-off from snowpack and precipitation from the surrounding watershed into the Virgin River
- Seasonal flows influenced by the Virgin River basin
- Regional coordination with Washington County Water Conservancy District
- Demand influenced by nearby tourism and proximity to in greater Zion

3. Trigger Conditions (When Plan Activates)

Stage 0 – Conserve

- Implement Conservation Plan

Stage 1 – Caution

- Promote Stage 1 watering guidelines
- Reduce irrigation of public facilities by 10%
- Implement Stage 1 water rate structure
- Stage 0 actions Plus:
 - Leverage smart metering systems to strengthen messaging
 - Prevent lawn installations May through September
 - Reject new connections for non-critical facilities with demands over 9 MGY
 - Increase enforcement of municipal water waste policies

Stage 2 – Concern

- Deploy Stage 2 communications
- Promote Stage 2 watering guidelines
- Reduce irrigation of public facilities by 20%
- Implement Stage 2 rate structure
- Stage 1 actions plus:
 - Defer new grass installation. Drip irrigated, water-efficient plants only
 - Prohibit irrigation of ornamental lawns in all sectors
 - Defer new private swimming pool permits
 - Reject new connections for non-critical facilities with demands over 3 MGY
 - Restrict car washing frequency
 - Prohibit ornamental fountain operation
 - Prohibit comfort mist cooling systems

Stage 3 – Alarm

- Deploy Stage 3 communications
- Promote Stage 3 watering guidelines
- Reduce irrigation of public facilities by 30%
- Implement Stage 3 rate structure
- Stage 2 actions plus:
 - Spray irrigation prohibited except for communal active recreation areas
 - Watering limited to drip irrigation or hand-held hose with positive shut-off nozzle
 - Planting only allowed for conversion of lawn areas to water-efficient landscape
 - Swimming pools covered when not in use. Only make up water allowed

Stage 4 – Crisis

- Deploy Stage 4 communications
- Deploy Stage 4 watering guidelines
- Reduce irrigation of public facilities by an additional 20% (60% total)
- Implement Stage 4 rate structure
- Stage 3 actions plus:
 - Outdoor irrigation prohibited except communal active recreation areas which are budgeted at 40% of average.
 - All outdoor water recreation suspended
 - Car washing prohibited, except dry wash products

4. Communication Plan

Virgin Town will coordinate with the Washington County Water Conservancy District (WCWCD) to provide information to customers regarding water supply availability and response stages via the following sources:

- *Website* – The news section will include information regarding shortage declaration and link to the WCWCD web site with additional information.
- *Social Media* – Town Facebook and Instagram pages will be utilized and posts also sent to neighborhood social media groups.
- *Email blasts* – Messages will be sent immediately using email addresses of water customers.
- *Press announcements* – The Public Information Officer (PIO) (Town Manager) will develop and draft a press release in the event of a water shortage declaration in consultation with the Mayor and Public Works Director.
- *Newsletter* – Periodic updates will be featured in printed newsletters as is practical.