



Town of  
**Longmeadow, Massachusetts**

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**TO:** Chairman Strange and Members of the Select Board

**FROM:** Corrin Meise-Munns, Assistant Town Manager / Director of Planning and Community Development

**DATE:** February 22, 2022

**SUBJECT:** Draft Longmeadow Outdoor Water Use Bylaw

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### **Introduction**

The Town of Longmeadow intends to submit a 2022 Annual Town Meeting warrant article to adopt an Outdoor Water Use Bylaw, attached here in draft form. The Town Manager's Office and the Department of Public Works is presenting this draft Bylaw to the Select Board in order to:

- bring the general topic and the specific contents of the Bylaw to the Select Board's attention, and
- provide the opportunity for the Select Board and members of the public to review the draft document in advance of the Town Manager's Office submitting the Bylaw as a warrant article for Annual Town Meeting.

### **Background**

On May 26, 2021, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP), Drinking Water Program (DWP) delivered a report to the Longmeadow Department of Public Works (DPW) summarizing the findings of the DWP's sanitary survey of the Longmeadow Water Department's public water system and a compliance plan. The sanitary survey had been conducted one month prior to the receipt of the letter, on April 28, 2021. A sanitary survey is an on-site review of the water sources, facilities, equipment, operation, and maintenance of a public water system for the purpose of evaluating the system's ability to produce and distribute safe drinking water.

A key finding of MassDEP DWP's 2021 Longmeadow sanitary survey is that Longmeadow's residential per capita water use, reported in gallons/person/day (G/P/D), has exceeded MassDEP's water conservation goal of 65 G/P/D. During the previous three years, Longmeadow's residential G/P/D had been reported at 120 G/P/D (2020), 92 G/P/D (2019), and 94 G/P/D (2018). As a component of Longmeadow's per capita water use reduction plan, the Town committed to establishing a water conservation bylaw requiring weather-responsive controls on automated lawn irrigation systems.

### **Summary of Bylaw Purpose and Contents**

This Bylaw was drafted in collaboration between staff from the Town Manager's Office and the DPW, with guidance from MassDEP's model Outdoor Water Use Bylaw. The purpose of this Bylaw is to protect, preserve and maintain public health, safety, and welfare, and the health of the environment, especially whenever there is in force a "State of Water Supply Conservation", a "State of Drought" or a "State of Water Supply Emergency", by ensuring:

- an adequate supply of water for drinking and fire protection;

- adequate quality and quantity of water in local aquatic habitats such as ponds, rivers and wetlands; and,
- that Longmeadow's per capita water use is in line with the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection's water conservation goal of 65 gallons per capita use per day, or as amended.

The Bylaw accomplishes these purposes by establishing:

- nonessential outdoor water use restrictions triggered by declarations of States of Water Supply Conservation, Drought, or Water Supply Emergency, each as defined in the Bylaw;
- a requirement for all customers of Longmeadow's public water supply to register new and existing in-ground irrigation systems with the DPW Water Department;
- a requirement to properly install all in-ground irrigation systems in accordance with the Uniform State Plumbing Code (248 CMR 10.00), and with
  - timing devices that can be set to make the systems conform with the Town's nonessential outdoor water use restrictions;
  - moisture-sensor or weather-based irrigation controllers; and
  - backflow prevention devices as approved by the Board of Water Commissioners (the Select Board)
- the procedures and criteria for issuing and terminating declarations of States of Water Supply Conservation, Drought, or Water Supply Emergency; and
- the enforcement authority, procedures, and penalties associated with violations of this Bylaw.

**Action at the February 22, 2022 Select Board Meeting**

No action is required of the Select Board at the February 22, 2022 meeting. Town staff will be present to answer any questions or concerns about the draft Bylaw language and content. As stated previously, this bylaw will be included as a warrant article in the draft 2022 Annual Town Meeting warrant for the Select Board's vote at their regularly scheduled meeting on March 21, 2022.