

Conserve Water

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IT IS NOTHING to panic about at this point, but the declining levels of Lubbock's two primary water sources < Lake Meredith and the Ogallala Aquifer < should get the attention of everyone in Lubbock.

It does not mean that Lubbock is going dry and that we will be desperate for water in the near future. But it serves as a sober reminder that water is not a limitless resource, and it should discourage the tendency to take water for granted.

And most of us take water for granted in many different ways < from leaving water running while we are brushing our teeth to using a hose instead of a broom to clean a sidewalk or driveway to using a toilet as a disposal to get rid of an insect.

One flush, and the bug goes down the drain. But so do several gallons of water that need not have been wasted.

CRMWA allocation could be cut

The water level at Lake Meredith has fallen to 65.93 feet, which is only 2.57 above the record low of 63.36 feet in 1981 that caused Canadian River Municipal Water Authority directors to cut the allocation of water to Lubbock and the other 10 member cities that get water from the lake.

If the drought continues, directors will have no choice but to cut the allocation again. That would cause Lubbock to have to rely more heavily on well water.

And that would further lower the levels of underground water here. The depth level of the Ogallala Aquifer declined by 0.69 feet in the past year.

Rain is the answer to the problem. Rain would bring more water into Lake Meredith and would help to recharge the aquifer. It would also decrease on the amount of the underground water that farmers use for irrigation. But we have no more guarantees of getting rain this year than we have had during the other years of the drought that brought about the problem .

We all share responsibility

Residents of Lubbock and the South Plains must work together to conserve water. Everyone can use smaller amounts of water, and the savings can add up to very significant amounts when multiplied by thousands of people.

Turn off faucets when they are not needed. Water lawns when it is cooler outside to reduce evaporation losses, and avoid allowing water to run out into the street. Wash cars with a bucket of water and rinse with the hose rather than leaving the hose on the whole time.

Water-efficient toilets and shower heads can be installed. A plastic bottle filled with water put into the tanks of older toilets can displace water and use less water per flush. Wash dishes and laundry only when there are full loads.

Water conservation is going to become increasingly important in the future, and we should get used to using less water now. We all share in the responsibility to preserve this precious resource and to make our use of water be as efficient as possible.