

Lake Mead's steady decline hits low water mark



Shrinking Lake Mead is a major driving factor in a new three-jurisdiction effort to combat water waste in the Las Vegas Valley, starting with Henderson.

Henderson, the Las Vegas Valley Water District and North Las Vegas announced Wednesday they are joining forces for joint water waste enforcement patrols. It's the first time all three agencies have come together to enforce water waste ordinances in Southern Nevada, a Henderson news release stated.

"The declining lake is first and center in this. There is a sense of urgency now more than ever," said Juliana Castiblanco, a senior utilities business analyst for Henderson. "We did a guinea pig test for this event a year ago and the results (in warnings to water users) were more than double a previous event."

On Sunday, LVVWD and North Las Vegas will aid Henderson conservation awareness assistants by conducting water waste patrols in commercial and residential areas within

Henderson that have previously been documented for high water waste, according to the news release. Henderson will assist LVVWD and North Las Vegas in their jurisdictions this summer. About 10 people will be checking properties in Henderson for possible water violations, Castiblanco said.

All events will be one-day efforts supported by daily water waste patrols that are conducted seven days a week, Castiblanco said.

"By combining our water conservation efforts to target water waste, we can patrol larger areas within the valley to identify and notify households and businesses of their prohibited or excessive watering," said Tina Chen, Henderson conservation and customer service supervisor.

Henderson customers in violation of the seasonal watering restrictions or found allowing water to spray or flow off the property may be subject to Henderson's administrative water waste fines. Fines range from \$40 to \$2,560.

Warnings are usually the first step in the process before potential fines, Castiblanco said.

Examples of water waste include:

- Irrigating, including drip irrigation, on any day other than a property's assigned days.
- Irrigation systems that allow water to spray or flow off property.
- Draining a swimming pool or spa into the street rather than a designated sanitary sewer port where water is recycled.
- Allowing the loss, escape or excess use of water through a break, leak or other malfunction.

In effect through Aug. 31, the mandatory summer watering schedule limits watering to no more than six days a week and never between 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Watering on Sundays is never allowed.

Henderson residents and businesses can learn more about water waste, water conservation and assigned watering days at cityofhenderson.com.

The water level at Lake Mead was at 1,046.51 feet as of 3 p.m. Wednesday, 6/15/22, a drop of nearly 6.5 feet in the past month.