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Clemson watering ban likely to be lifted soon

By Terry Cregar
STAFF WRITER
tcregar@greenvillenews.com

CLEMSON — City residents, who for the most part have been "very compliant" with Clemson's mandatory water restrictions, could get a break soon.

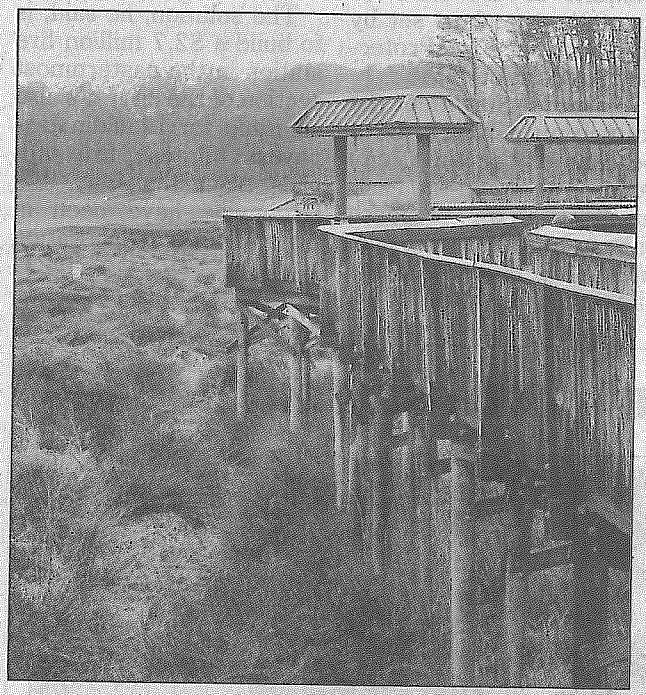
City Administrator Rick Cotton said Monday night that an ordinance lifting the mandatory restrictions will be ready for City Council's consideration by its next meeting in two weeks.

And, based on comments from council members Monday, the current restrictions — now in their eighth month — will be lifted.

"It's been a long stretch," council member Elouise James said.

Council implemented mandatory restrictions on outdoor watering last summer shortly after the state Drought Response Committee upgraded the drought status for Pickens and other Upstate counties from severe to extreme.

The restrictions currently in place in the city of Clemson include odd/even lawn watering times and a ban on washing cars and boats in private driveways and washing down sidewalks.



JOHN C. STEVENSON / Staff

The water in Lake Hartwell is still several yards away from the pilings of the boardwalk at Abernathy Park in Clemson.

Clemson is one of only two of the 14 members of the Anderson Regional Joint Water System that currently have mandatory water restrictions, said city utilities manager Benjie McGill.

McGill asked the council Monday night to bring the city in line with the other members of the regional water system that use Lake Hartwell as a gauge for drought status.

The regional water system draws its water from Lake Hartwell, which has benefited from recent rain and from the Army Corps of Engineers' decision to stop outflow from the Hartwell Dam.

Last weekend's rain helped raise the lake's water level by nearly a foot over the past week, and the corps is projecting that the water level will rise by at least another 6 inches by the end of this week.