

455B.266 Priority allocation.

1. After any event described in paragraphs “a” through “d” of [this subsection](#) has occurred, the department shall investigate and, if appropriate, may implement the priority allocation plan provided in [subsection 2](#). The department shall require existing permittees to implement appropriate emergency conservation measures. The pertinent public notice and hearing requirements of [subsection 4](#) of [this section](#) and [sections 455B.271](#) and [455B.278](#) shall apply to the implementation of the plan.

a. Receipt of a petition by twenty-five affected persons or a governmental subdivision requesting that the priority allocation plan be implemented due to a substantial local water shortage.

b. Receipt of information from a state or federal natural resource, research, or climatological agency indicating that a drought of local or state magnitude is imminent.

c. Issuance by the governor of a proclamation of a disaster emergency due to a drought or other event affecting water resources of the state.

d. Determination by the department in conjunction with the department of homeland security and emergency management of a local crisis which affects availability of water.

2. Notwithstanding a person’s possession of a permit or the person’s use of water being a nonregulated use, the department may suspend or restrict usage of water by category of use on a local or statewide basis in the following order:

a. Water conveyed across state boundaries.

b. Uses of water primarily for recreational or aesthetic purposes.

c. Uses of water for the irrigation of hay, corn, soybeans, oats, grain sorghum, or wheat.

d. Uses of water for the irrigation of crops other than hay, corn, soybeans, oats, grain sorghum, or wheat.

e. Uses of water for manufacturing or other industrial processes.

f. Uses of water for generation of electrical power for public consumption.

g. Uses of water for livestock production.

h. Uses of water for human consumption and sanitation supplied by rural water districts, municipal water systems, or other public water supplies as defined in [section 455B.171](#).

i. Uses of water for human consumption and sanitation supplied by a private water supply as defined in [section 455B.171](#).

3. Unless the governor has issued a proclamation described in [subsection 1](#), paragraph “c”, the department shall not impose a suspension of water use or a further restriction, other than conservation, on the uses of water provided in [subsection 2](#), paragraphs “g” through “i” or on users of water pursuant to a contract with the state as provided in [section 455B.263](#), [subsections 5 and 6](#). If a contract with the state as provided in [section 455B.263](#), [subsections 5 and 6](#) was in effect prior to March 5, 1985, the department shall not impose a suspension of water use or a further restriction, other than conservation, on the users of water pursuant to that contract.

4. Suspension or restrictions of water usage applicable to otherwise nonregulated water users shall be by emergency order of the director which the department shall cause to be published in local newspapers of general circulation and broadcast by local media. The emergency order shall state an effective date of the suspension or restriction and shall be immediately effective on such date unless stayed, modified or vacated at a hearing before the commission or by a court.

[C58, 62, 66, 71, 73, 75, 77, 79, 81, §455A.21; [82 Acts, ch 1199, §20, 96](#)]

C83, §455B.266

[83 Acts, ch 137, §13](#); [85 Acts, ch 7, §6](#); [86 Acts, ch 1136, §1](#); [86 Acts, ch 1245, §1899A, 1899B](#); [92 Acts, ch 1139, §30](#); [2003 Acts, ch 179, §157](#); [2013 Acts, ch 29, §56](#); [2025 Acts, ch 30, §73](#)

Referred to in [§455B.265A](#), [455B.271](#)

Subsection 2, paragraphs c and d amended