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**CATAWBA-WATEREE
DROUGHT MANAGEMENT ADVISORY GROUP**

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**Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group Advises Limited
Landscape Irrigation**

The Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group (CW DMAG) today advised its members that the Catawba-Wateree Basin's drought measures have improved enough to permit modification to water use restrictions including, but not limited to, limited landscape irrigation, restricted to one day per week in accordance with minimum Stage 3 requirements of the Low Inflow Protocol (LIP). The previous recommendation from CW DMAG, issued last September, had been for a complete ban on landscape irrigation due to rapid decline of all drought measures monitored by the Group.

"The success of water customers in cutting their use, coupled with the recent rains, has brought the reservoirs back to normal conditions," said Ed Bruce, CW DMAG coordinator. "Other drought indicators are still a long way from normal, but have shown several weeks of continuous improvement;" Bruce added. "In the last week the stream flow indicator has moved to Stage 3 from Stage 4 levels."

"We've needed our customers to conserve, and we still need to be cautious about our limited water storage," said Nick Stegall, Rock Hill's public services administrator. "No one can predict where will be in several months, but we're encouraged that things are looking a little better," Stegall added.

Water customers should know that forecasts still anticipate drier than normal conditions, and the indicators could once again turn worse and jeopardize new plantings. The decision was in part based on the fact that, unlike last year at this time, the area is already under water use restrictions. The DMAG will review the drought indicators and update its recommendations as appropriate by May 30.

The water suppliers may provide more detailed information to their customers in future communications.

Drought and Weather Indicators

In arriving at its newest recommendation, the CW-DMAG reviewed the area's major drought indicators along with the National Weather Service's predictions of six-month weather trends.

The U.S. Drought Monitor map now shows the area in "Extreme" drought, one level better than the previous "Exceptional" drought designation.

Groundwater levels have stopped decreasing, and have begun to stabilize.

The six-month average of area stream flows is now greater than 40 percent of normal putting it in Stage 3.

The reservoir storage index has recovered to above normal for this time of year better positioning the region to accept the high summer losses from natural evaporation and transpiration of the area's vegetation cover.

Rainfall – 2008's first quarter rainfall is still below normal, but higher than last summer and fall.

National Weather Service Trends are predicting lower-than-average rainfall throughout the summer due to the continuing influence of La Niña.

The Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group (CW-DMAG) was formed to regularly review the drought status and to recommend and coordinate needed actions for the Groups' members. It also reviews the Low Inflow Protocol (LIP) and recommends possible improvements to Duke Energy. Normally scheduled to meet once a year, the CW-DMAG since late summer 2007 has received weekly drought status reports and has met as a group at least monthly. CW-DMAG members include the area's public water suppliers and several large industrial users that withdraw water from the Basin, NC and SC agencies, the US Geological Survey, and Duke Energy. The CW-DMAG and the Low Inflow Protocol (LIP) are outcomes of Duke Energy's relicensing process for the Catawba-Wateree Hydro Project. The LIP will become part of Duke Energy's New License for the Project to be issued by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission.