



Media release

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Emergency forum helps locals save water

A local resilience forum is helping locals save water after the Environment Agency recently confirmed that parts of Bedfordshire are experiencing drought.

Despite recent rain, the county is experiencing one of the driest six month periods across East Anglia, since records began. As a result the Bedford and Luton Local Resilience forum (BLLRF) is urging locals to save water by issuing tips which could save households thousands of litres of water per year.

The forum, made up of Bedford and Luton councils, The Environment Agency and the bluelight service, is asking locals to take simple measures such as not leaving the tap running when brushing their teeth, this alone can save up to six litres of water per minute which across the country is enough to fill over 1,400 Olympic size swimming pools.

Locals are also being asked to wash their cars with a bucket, keep a jug of water in the fridge rather than run the tap until the water goes cold and let their grass grow as this provides shade for soil and helps retain water.

Although water companies in the region have said they will not impose house pipe bans this summer, Chairman of BLLRF, Assistant Chief Constable Kath Govier from Bedfordshire Police explains why it is important to conserve water: "We don't know how long this drought is going to last, if it



continues it may result in hose bans or water restrictions between certain hours of the day so it makes sense to take these simple measures to conserve water.

“Reducing water consumption also makes economic sense. By reducing water consumption, residents will not only save money on their water bills, but in the longer term may also save money on their weekly food shop. The water shortages means that local farmers are struggling to feed crops such as potatoes and carrots which may mean the prices rise.

“If everyone does their bit by taking one or more of the steps mentioned to help conserve water, it will have a significant impact. We have *over 165,453* households and businesses in the region so you can imagine what an impact it would have if every household or business took some of these steps. We all will benefit in the long run.”

For more information on ways to save water and what the drought means for you visit <http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/drought> For information about emergency planning advice go to <http://www.whatwouldyoudoif.co.uk/> Residents can receive updates and also share their own emergency planning advice on http://twitter.com/#!/what_would and <http://www.facebook.com/pages/What-Would-You-Do-If/171315149591931>

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Notes to editors:

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1. BLLRF was formed in 2004, bringing together the key agencies required to respond to emergencies.

Comprising local agencies including the emergency services, local authorities, National Health Service (NHS) and the voluntary and community sector, the forum was created to ensure the best possible plans are in place should a major emergency occur.



BLLRF's vision is to make Bedfordshire and Luton the best-prepared place for any emergency. Through the 'What would you do if...?' campaign, the forum aims to promote the importance of being prepared and ensure people living and working within the county feel safe. For more information visit www.whatwouldyoudoif.co.uk

2. Bedfordshire residents are most at risk of the following emergencies:

- [Flu pandemic](#)
- [Major river flooding](#)
- Low temperatures or heavy snow
- [Transport accident involving fuel or explosives](#)
- [Fuel supply disruption](#)

3. Sign up as an emergency volunteer by joining the Bedfordshire and Luton Emergency Volunteers Executive Committee (BLEVEC). This is a local partnership of charities, community groups and volunteers who work together as part of BLLRF to prepare for, and respond to emergencies. For more information please email volunteering@bllrf.org.uk or call us on 0300 300 4145.