May 2026

Hickory

CITY SNIPPETS

Information. Well Crafted.

CRITICAL DROUGHT UPDATE: TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT OUR WATER SUPPLY

Communities across the Catawba River Basin, including the City of Hickory, are feeling the serious impacts of ongoing dry weather. Reduced lake storage, decreasing streamflows, and worsening drought conditions have created a situation that requires immediate action. Drought is a naturally occurring part of our climate cycle, and while we can't control when rainfall returns, we can control how we manage our water resources—together.

A Regional Effort to Manage Water Wisely

For more than 20 years, the City of Hickory has worked in partnership with Duke Energy and other major water suppliers along the Catawba River to manage the region's water through a coordinated approach known as the Low Inflow Protocol (LIP). This shared management plan ensures that every community in the basin is making thoughtful, consistent decisions during times of drought or low water availability.

During drought periods, the Catawba-Wateree Drought Management Advisory Group monthly reviews lake levels, streamflows, groundwater conditions, and other indicators. In the LIP, drought stages are determined by the following three indicators: (1) how much water is in the reservoirs, (2) how much water is flowing into the reservoirs, and (3) the U.S. Drought Monitor, a government site that indicates areas experiencing a drought and the drought's severity.

Duke Energy performs a monthly evaluation of the three indicators and issues a report to all large water users along the Catawba, indicating which stage the basin is in and what actions should be taken to help conserve water. LIP stages are updated on the first and sixteenth days of the month. There are five stages with specific actions detailed for each stage:

- Stage 0 (Watch): Initial monitoring and voluntary conservation.
- Stage 1 (Voluntary Reductions): Goal is 3-5% reduction. Specific watering schedules are encouraged, and car washing should be minimized.
- Stage 2 (Mandatory Reductions): Goal is 5-10% reduction. Discretionary water uses are restricted, and public water suppliers start enforcing measures.
- Stage 3 (Severe): Stricter mandatory measures to achieve higher reductions.
- Stage 4 (Emergency): Highest restriction level, ensuring water is available for essential needs.

Working Together for Our Community

Water conservation is a shared responsibility. It protects our local water supply, supports regional stability, and helps ensure the Catawba River Basin remains a healthy and reliable resource for everyone. If drought conditions continue, higher level LIP stages may be declared, which require mandatory restrictions on water usage. The City of Hickory will keep you informed as conditions change. To learn more, please contact Public Utilities at 828-323-7427 or visit www.catawbawatereewmg.org.

To check the current drought status and any water use restrictions, please scan the QR code to visit the Drought webpage: www.hickorync.gov/drought

HICKORY
North Carolina
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HICKORY CITY COUNCIL
1st and 3rd Tuesdays
June 2 & 16
6 p.m.
Hickory City Hall
HickoryNC.gov

SAILS ORIGINAL MUSIC SERIES
Every Friday in May and June
7 p.m.
The Sails on the Square
HickoryNC.gov/SailsMusic

SUMMER TRACK SERIES
Thursdays, June 4-25
6-9 p.m.
Lenoir-Rhyne University
Outdoor Track
RunSignUp.com

LAVENDER FESTIVAL
Saturday, June 13
8 a.m. - 1 p.m.
Downtown Hickory
HickoryFarmersMarket.com

JUNETEENTH FESTIVAL
Saturday, June 20
2-8 p.m.
Lenoir-Rhyne University
Rhyne Building Lawn

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Sign up for email newsletters and follow us on social media:

City of Hickory, NC - Government

@CityofHickory

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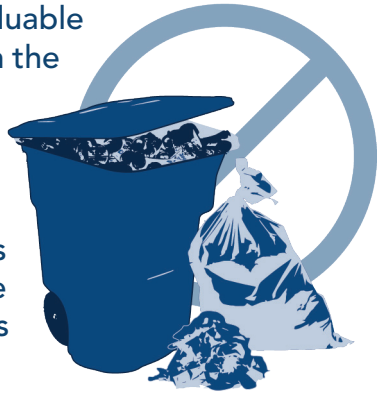
City of Hickory

RECYCLING RIGHT: KEEP BAGS, BATTERIES, AND BIOLOGICAL WASTE OUT OF THE BIN



Doing your part to recycle helps keep valuable materials out of the landfill, but only when the right items go into the recycling bin. Three of the most common contaminants that cause big problems in the recycling process are plastic bags, batteries, and biological waste. Keeping these items out of your recycling rollout protects the entire system and ensures your efforts truly make a difference.

Plastic Bags and Film Plastic
Plastic bags, grocery sacks, and plastic film wrap tangle in the machinery at recycling facilities, causing equipment breakdowns and safety hazards. These items cannot be processed in curbside recycling. Instead, many grocery stores and retailers offer drop-off bins specifically for bag and film recycling.

Batteries
Rechargeable and single-use batteries pose a serious fire risk when they end up in recycling trucks or sorting equipment. Even small batteries can spark under pressure. Batteries should always be taken to designated household hazardous waste sites or approved drop-off locations, not placed in curbside rollouts.

Biological Waste
Food scraps, yard waste, pet waste, and other organic material contaminate clean recyclables. Just one bin containing biological waste can cause an entire truckload—tons of potentially recyclable plastic, paper, and metal—to be rejected and sent to the landfill. Keeping your rollout clean, dry, and free of organic material is one of the simplest ways to protect the recycling stream.

One Bin Can Make a Big Difference
It only takes one contaminated recycling cart to contaminate an entire collection truck. That's why recycling correctly is a shared responsibility. When residents recycle right, more materials make it to the recycling center and fewer end up in the landfill. Together, we can keep Hickory's recycling stream clean, efficient, and sustainable for years to come. Thanks for doing your part to recycle smart!

For more information about residential recycling in the City of Hickory and helpful tips for recycling right at home and in the office, visit the City of Hickory website, www.hickorync.gov/sanitation.