

Lake Travis Looks Full, Doesn't that mean we have plenty of water and don't need to conserve?

No, because all of that water doesn't belong to us. What many people don't realize is that essentially all of the water we see in lakes is already appropriated to river authorities, municipalities, and farm irrigation. The state appropriates water to applicants through a system of water rights. The applicants are responsible for making productive use of the water; otherwise the state can reappropriate the water to other users through a process called adjudication. While all water carried in rivers and lakes is appropriated, all appropriated water is not sold. The Lower Colorado River Authority (LCRA) which holds the rights to much of the water stored in Lake Travis may also sell it to entities in the Brazos, Guadalupe and San Antonio River basins.

The water in Lake Travis is believed by many to be over appropriated. In a year of average rainfall, all water carried by rivers is fully committed for use. It is the storage volume of reservoirs that permits us to have water in years with less than average rainfall. When the state experiences another prolonged drought such as the one that just ended, there will not be enough water available to support all current uses.

In following the Districts Conservation Policy mandated by the state, annual mandatory watering restrictions will begin May 1 – September 31 for all District residents and Commercial, Multi-housing will continue annually. Thank you for helping conserve water for today and tomorrow! Visit www.wcid17.org for further conservation tips.