

BAKER CITY WATER USE

DAY	WATER USE*	HIGH TEMP
8/1	5.45 m/g	97
8/2	4.68 m/g	91
8/3	4.60 m/g	84
8/4	4.41 m/g	85
8/5	4.23 m/g	88
8/6	4.94 m/g	93
8/7	5.24 m/g	95
8/8	5.30 m/g	103
8/9	5.00 m/g	108
8/10	5.15 m/g	109
8/11	4.82 m/g	94
8/12	4.85 m/g	84
8/13	4.60 m/g	88
8/14	4.71 m/g	90
8/15	5.13 m/g	96
8/16	4.76 m/g	89
8/17	4.39 m/g	92
8/18	4.59 m/g	92
8/19	4.58 m/g	81
8/20	4.07 m/g	82
8/21	4.15 m/g	87

*million gallons
Sources: Baker City Public Works Department, National Weather Service

WATER

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"It's hot, it's dry and this is when you realize how valuable water is for everyone," Owen wrote in an email to the Herald. So far in August the city has gone through slightly less water on average per day — 4.9 million gallons — than during July, when the daily average was about 5.4 million gallons. Since July 1 the daily demand hasn't dropped below 4 million gallons, and it has topped 5 million on half of the days. However, use has exceeded 5 million gallons on only one day — Aug. 15 — in the past 11 days. As of Tuesday, Baker City had used almost 100 million gallons of water during August. In July the city used more than 169 million gallons. Owen said Goodrich Reservoir, high in the Elkhorn Mountains northwest of town, is holding about 135 million gallons of water. During August the city has been diverting about 2.2 million gallons per day from Goodrich, a natural lake that the city where the city built a dam decades ago to increase the capacity. The rest of the water is coming from springs and streams in the city's 10,000-acre watershed on the east slopes of the Elkhorns about 10 miles west of town. So far in August the city has used just 5.3 million gallons of water from its other backup water source — a well into which the city has a state permit to pour up to 200 million gallons of water from the watershed each year. The city has not used any water from the well since Aug. 10. As was the case during July, residents' demand for water has generally followed the temperature trend. On Aug. 9, when Baker City set an all-time temperature record of 108 degrees at the airport, the city supplied just over 5 million gallons. The next day, when the temperature reached 109, the city used slightly more water. But daily use has dropped since then, with temperatures rising into the 80s and 90s. Owen said the city has no plans to restrict water usage for private residences or businesses. During the summer of 2015 the city asked residents to reduce water usage, but it did not impose mandatory restrictions. The city has cut back on water use at Quail Ridge Golf Course.

RESIGN

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Warner wrote in his email that the remaining six city councilors will discuss Thomas' resignation, and its ramifications, during their Tuesday meeting. According to the city charter, the City Council appoints a replacement when a councilor resigns. The appointed councilor serves the remainder of the departing councilor's term. Thomas' term expires Dec. 31, 2018. The situation could potentially be complicated by the timing, with the Nov. 6 election a little more than two months away. Four of the seven City Council seats, including the one Thomas previously held, are up for election Nov. 6. Tuesday is the deadline for candidates to file for the election. As of this morning, four people have been certified as candidates — incumbent Randy Schiewe, along with Daryl DeMoss, Kevin Luckini and Lynette Perry. Seven others have been authorized to collect the 40 signatures required to be a candidate — Randy Daugherty, who is a former councilor; Slade Elbert, Raymond Rienks, Doni Bruland, Michael Finney, Steve Howland and Carly Annable. The potential complication has to do with the term limits clause in the city charter, which limits councilors to serving no more than two consecutive terms, including partial terms. If the Council appointed as Thomas' replacement one of the candidates in the Nov. 6 election, and that person was subsequently elected, he or she would be able to serve only one term as an elected councilor, because the time serving the remainder of Thomas' term would count as one term, even though it would last for just four months or so. The top three candidates in the Nov. 6 election will be elected to four-year terms. The fourth-place finisher will serve a two-year term.

DRY SPELL

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The gauge there has recorded a trace of rain on seven days — three in June, one in July and three more so far in August. But by Weather Service standards, a trace of rain doesn't count as "measurable." To reach that threshold requires a minimum of 0.01 — that is, one one-hundredths of an inch — of rain. If the current forecast proves accurate — no chance of rain until Sunday — the dry spell will reach at least 66 days. The rain would have to hold off for at least five more days, though, for 2018 to jump up to third place on the roster of records, which dates to 1943. Three three longest rainless stretches at the airport: Oct. 31, 1987 • 79 days — Aug. 14 to Oct. 31, 1987 • 72 days — Aug. 15 to

Oct. 25, 1999 • 70 days — July 14 to Sept. 22, 2012 The arid summer has had a predictable effect on drought conditions. At the end of July, most of Baker County was rated as abnormally dry but not in a drought, according to the U.S. Drought Monitor. The county's southwest corner was in a moderate drought, and a small part of that area was expected to be in severe drought. By Aug. 7 most of the county was in a moderate drought, and as of Aug. 14 the area rated as extreme drought had spread to much of the county. The county's northeast and northwest corners are still rated as moderate drought. In early August U.S. Agriculture Secretary Sonny Perdue declared a natural disaster in Baker County due to drought. The designation makes

farmers and ranchers in both primary and bordering counties eligible for federal aid, including emergency loans through the Farm Service Agency. Perdue's announcement followed two earlier drought declarations. In June 6 the Baker County Board of Commissioners asked Oregon Gov. Kate Brown to declare a drought emergency for the county following a winter with a below-average snowpack and a relatively dry spring — normally the wettest period in the county. Rainfall for 2018 at the airport totals 4.77 inches, which is about 30 percent below the average for the period Jan. 1 through Aug. 23. With nature contributing little to nothing toward irrigating crop fields, many

farmers and ranchers have had to rely solely on water stored in reservoirs, said Wes Morgan, who manages the Burnt River Irrigation District in southern Baker County, where the drought has been more severe. "It's definitely stuff I haven't seen, the amount of water I've had to release (from Unity Reservoir)," Morgan said Thursday morning. Unity Reservoir, which is the sole reservoir in the irrigation district, is holding about 6,500 acre-feet of water — about 25 percent of its capacity.

Morgan said he hopes to have enough water to meet irrigators' needs through mid-September, but he said it's possible he'll "come up a few days short." Irrigation season typically ends around Sept. 30, he said. Water from Unity Reservoir irrigates fields downriver to the Durkee Valley. The drought has more dramatically depleted the much larger Phillips Reservoir, along the Powder River about 17 miles southwest of Baker City. It's holding about 11,500

acre-feet of water, 16 percent of full. Phillips Reservoir was actually drawn down even further, though, in two of the past three years. There was a respite from the ongoing drought in 2017 — the result of the prodigious snowpack the previous winter — when the reservoir was more than half full in late August. But the previous two summers the reservoir nearly emptied — it was at 7,700 acre-feet on Aug. 23, 2016, and at 7,200 acre-feet in 2015.

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PG-13
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FRI-THURS: (4:00) 7:00, 9:35

THE SPY WHO DUMPED ME
PG-13
Two best friends unwittingly become entangled in an international conspiracy when one of them discovers the boyfriend who dumped her was actually a spy.

FRI-THURS: (4:05) 7:05, 9:40

THE MEG
PG-13
After receiving an attack by what he claims was a 70-foot shark, Jason Taylor must confront his fears to save those trapped in a sunken ocean liner.

FRI-THURS: (4:10) 7:10, 9:45

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