

GREAT WATER HEALTHY LAKES

CHOOSE TAP | SPARTANBURG WATER

2018-2019 Lake Alerts

April 1: A reminder to Lake Bowen, Lake Blalock and Reservoir #1 adjacent property owners

Most property owners like to take advantage of the warmer weather to trim any vegetation around their home, however, we want to remind all adjacent property owners that Spartanburg Water has important policies in place for all vegetation around Lake Bowen, Lake Blalock and Reservoir #1 buffer areas.

No trees, brush or vegetation on Spartanburg Water System property may be cut, pruned or removed without a valid permit issued by our Watershed Management staff.

Thank you for helping to protect and preserve the buffers around Lake Bowen, Lake Blalock and Reservoir #1 that, in turn, protect water quality for all of us.

For more information about applying for a permit, please call or visit:

Lake Bowen Wardens' Office

8515 Highway 9, Inman, SC 29349

(864) 592-2240 or

Lake Blalock Wardens' Office:

1925 Sandy Ford Road, Chesnee, SC 29323

(864) 578-5442

You may also go to our website for more information at: www.spartanburgwater.org.

March 15 Update: Lake drawdowns end March 17

Spartanburg Water initiated a lake level drawdown December 1, 2018, in order to allow adjoining property owners at both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock the opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance while the water levels are down. However, the above-average rainfall over the past three months has resulted in Lake Bowen staying above "full-pool" level for most of the scheduled drawdown period with it currently just above "full-pool."

The drawdown was originally planned to end February 28, 2019, but a decision to extend the drawdown period through March 17 was based on evaluations of extended weather forecasts and consultation with our partners at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR).

SCDNR requested Spartanburg Water return the lakes to normal operating levels on or before April 1, 2019, to ensure no disruption of conditions during fish-spawning season. Due to Lake Bowen's current status, no action is necessary to adjust its level.

Staff will make the necessary adjustments to return Lake Blalock to "full-pool" status beginning Monday, March 18, 2019.

March 8 Update: Lake drawdowns continue through March 17

At the February 26, 2019, Commission of Public Works Meeting, Spartanburg Water staff announced that the lake drawdown period for Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock would be extended from March 1 to March 17.

The decision to extend the drawdown period through March 17 was based on evaluations of extended weather forecasts and consultation with our partners at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources (SCDNR).

SCDNR requested Spartanburg Water return the lakes to normal operating levels on or before April 1, 2019, to ensure no disruption of conditions during fish-spawning season.

On March 18, 2019, our staff will make the necessary adjustments to return the lakes to "full pool" status. We'll continue to keep you informed with additional Lake Alerts.

March 1 Update: Lake drawdowns extended through March 17

The surrounding area has continued to receive above-average rainfall causing Lake Bowen to remain above its "full-pool" level and Lake Blalock is just below "full-pool" level.

After careful evaluation of the extended weather forecast from various weather agencies and to allow adjoining property owners additional time to perform routine maintenance, Spartanburg Water has decided to extend the end of the drawdown period from March 1 to March 17.

Spartanburg Water System staff have consulted with our partners at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources; they've requested that we return the lakes to normal operating levels on or before April 1, 2019, to ensure no disruption of conditions during fish-spawning season.

On March 18, 2019, Spartanburg Water System staff will make the necessary adjustments to return the lakes to "full pool" status. We'll continue to keep you informed with additional Lake Alerts.

We also wanted to answer a question that some of our neighbors have asked us:

Q: Why has Spartanburg Water System been able to lower Lake Blalock and not Lake Bowen?

A: Both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock were constructed to serve as drinking water reservoirs.

The most recent modifications to the Lake Blalock Dam feature a gate system that allows a more-controlled release of water, in addition to providing operators the ability to lower water levels more quickly within the Lake Blalock drinking water reservoir. However, because the Lake Bowen Dam was constructed much earlier—in 1959—the same gate-system technology for quicker releases used on Blalock isn't available.

February 22 Update: Lake drawdowns extended due to increased rainfall

As you may recall from previous Lake Alerts, Spartanburg Water System initiated a lake-level drawdown on December 1, 2018, with plans to continue it through February 2019. The target range of the drawdown is 2.5 to 3 feet below what is referred to as "full-pool level" for both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock. The purpose of the drawdown is to allow adjoining property owners the opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance while the water levels are down.

Due to an extremely wet winter, and the current rainy period, Lake Bowen remains above its "full-pool" level. Lake Blalock has also gained 2.5 feet and is approximately six inches below "full-pool" level.

After careful evaluation of the extended weather forecast from various weather agencies and to allow adjoining property owners additional time to perform routine maintenance, Spartanburg Water has decided to extend the end of the drawdown period from March 1 to March 17.

Spartanburg Water System staff have consulted with our partners at the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources; they've requested that we return the lakes to normal operating levels on or before April 1, 2019, to ensure no disruption of conditions during fish-spawning season.

On March 18, 2019, Spartanburg Water System staff will make the necessary adjustments to return the lakes to "full pool" status. We'll continue to keep you informed with additional Lake Alerts.

In addition to today's update, we also wanted to answer a question that some of our neighbors have asked us:

Q: Why has Spartanburg Water System been able to lower Lake Blalock and not Lake Bowen?

A: Both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock were constructed to serve as drinking water reservoirs.

The most recent modifications to the Lake Blalock Dam feature a gate system that allows a more-controlled release of water, in addition to providing operators the ability to lower water levels more quickly within the Lake Blalock drinking water reservoir. However, because the Lake Bowen Dam was constructed much earlier—in 1959—the same gate-system technology for quicker releases used on Blalock isn't available.

February 15 Lake Alert: Heavy rain in forecast impacts lake drawdowns

Spartanburg Water initiated a lake level drawdown on December 1, 2018, with plans to continue it through February 2019. The target range of the drawdown is 2.5-3 feet below what is referred to as "full pool level" for both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock.

As a result of drier weather in early February, Lake Bowen's water level has dropped around one-half foot below full pool, however, heavy rainfall is expected over the next week, which will likely result in Bowen's level rising once again to above full pool. This means Lake Bowen is not projected to reach its target level by February 28.

Spartanburg Water plans to remain on schedule with the drawdown and starting around March 1, staff will make adjustments to return the lakes to normal operating levels.

February 8 Lake Alert: Level at Lake Bowen continues slight downtrend

Spartanburg Water initiated a lake level drawdown on December 1, 2018, with plans to continue it through February 2019. The target range of the drawdown is 2.5-3 feet below what is referred to as "full pool level" for both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock.

As a result of drier weather over the past two weeks Lake Bowen's water level has dropped around one-half foot below full pool, but the drier weather may have come a little too late. Heavy rainfall in December and January have resulted in Lake Bowen staying above full pool for most of the scheduled drawdown period. At the current rate of decline, Lake Bowen is only dropping around three inches per week. Lake Bowen is not projected to reach its target level by the end of February.

Spartanburg Water plans to remain on schedule with the drawdown and starting around March 1, staff will make adjustments to return the lakes to normal operating levels.

Even though Lake Bowen will not reach its intended target level during the current drawdown cycle, adjacent property owners may still find it beneficial to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance while the water levels are down.

February 1 Lake Alert: Water Level at Lake Bowen Has Inched Down

Spartanburg Water initiated a lake level drawdown on December 1, 2018, with plans to continue it through February 2019. The target range of the drawdown is 2.5-3 feet below what is referred to as "full pool level" for both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock.

As a result of drier weather over the past week the Lake Bowen water level has slightly declined but remains near "full pool" level. While Lake Bowen level has decline this week, if wet weather patterns return, it may prevent Bowen from reaching or sustaining lower levels by February 28.

One of the main benefits of the drawdown is that it gives adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Spartanburg Water continues to recommend that any boats be moved from the water during this drawdown period. Our wardens can answer any specific questions regarding boats on the lake.

January 25 Lake Alert: Rainfall continues to affect lake drawdowns

Spartanburg Water initiated a lake level drawdown on December 1, 2018, with plans to continue it through February 2019. The target range of the drawdown is 2.5-3 feet below what is referred to as "full pool level" for both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock.

Lake Blalock has been lowered to within the 2.5-3 foot range, however, above average rainfall has continued throughout the month of January and Lake Bowen has remained above "full pool." If these wet weather patterns continue, it may prevent Bowen from reaching or sustaining lower levels by February 28.

One of the main benefits of the drawdown is that it gives adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Spartanburg Water continues to recommend that any boats be moved from the water during this drawdown period. Our wardens can answer any specific questions regarding boats on the lake.

Lake Alert: January 18 Drawdowns Update

Reminder: Adjacent property owners on Spartanburg Water's reservoirs should be aware that we are conducting a lake level drawdown of 2.5-3 feet below Lake Bowen's and Lake Blalock's full pool level. Spartanburg Water initiated the lake level drawdown on December 1, 2018, and will continue it through February 2019. While Lake Blalock is within the target range, Lake Bowen is not.

Lake Bowen has dropped about 2 inches since the last rainfall event on January 13, which places Bowen at nearly full pool level. The watershed received a total of 66.8 inches of rain during 2018 with 19.73 inches of that rain falling in November and December alone. To date, 3.58 inches of rain have fallen in 2019, compared to 2.64 inches of rainfall in all of January 2018.

Consistent rains result in higher stream flow and lake levels, requiring a longer time to reach our target level for Lake Bowen. If projected wet weather patterns continue, it may prevent Spartanburg Water from reaching or sustaining lower levels in Lake Bowen.

The drawdown provides our adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Although not required, we continue to recommend that any boats be moved from the water during the drawdown period. Our wardens can answer any specific questions regarding boats on the lake.

Lake Alert: January 11 Drawdowns Update

Reminder: Adjacent property owners on Spartanburg Water's reservoirs should be aware that we are conducting a lake level drawdown of 2.5-3 feet below Lake Bowen's and Lake Blalock's full pool level. Spartanburg Water initiated the lake level drawdown on December 1, 2018, and will continue it through February 2019. While Lake Blalock is within the target range, Lake Bowen is not.

With drier weather over the past five days, Lake Bowen has dropped more than one-half foot since January 5, but is still approximately one-tenth foot above the full pool level. Our watershed received 1.43 inches of rain over the last week and we continue to watch predicted weather patterns. Consistent rains result in higher stream flow and lake levels, requiring a longer time to reach our target level for Lake Bowen. If projected wet weather patterns continue, it may prevent Spartanburg Water from reaching or sustaining lower levels in Lake Bowen.

The drawdown provides our adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Lake Alert: January 4 Drawdowns Update

Reminder: Adjacent property owners on Spartanburg Water's reservoirs should be aware that we are conducting a lake level drawdown of 2.5-3 feet below Lake Bowen's and Lake Blalock's full pool level. Spartanburg Water initiated the lake level drawdown on December 1, 2018, and will continue it through February 2019. While Lake Blalock is within the target range, Lake Bowen is not.

Our watershed received 2.87 inches of rain over the last week and we continue to watch predicted weather patterns. Consistent heavy rains result in higher stream flow and lake levels, requiring a longer time to reach our target level for Lake Bowen. If projected wet weather patterns continue, it may prevent Spartanburg Water from reaching or sustaining lower levels in Lake Bowen.

The drawdown provides our adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Although not required, we continue to recommend that any boats be moved from the water during the drawdown period. Our wardens can answer any specific questions regarding boats on the lake.

Lake Alert: Thursday, December 27, Drawdowns Update

Reminder: Adjacent property owners on Spartanburg Water's reservoirs should be aware that we are conducting a lake level drawdown of 2.5-3 feet below Lake Bowen's and Lake Blalock's full pool level. Spartanburg Water initiated the lake level drawdown on December 1. While Lake Blalock is within the target range, Lake Bowen is not.

We continue to watch weather patterns, with heavy rainfall forecast for Thursday evening and throughout Friday. We expect this to result in higher stream flow and lake levels, requiring a longer time to reach our target level for Lake Bowen. If projected wet weather patterns continue, it may prevent Spartanburg Water from reaching or sustaining lower levels in Lake Bowen.

The drawdown provides our adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Although not required, we continue to recommend that any boats be moved from the water during the drawdown period. Our wardens can answer any specific questions regarding boats on the lake.

Lake Alert: December 21 Drawdowns Update

Reminder: Adjacent property owners on Spartanburg Water's reservoirs should be aware that we are conducting a lake level drawdown of 2.5-3 feet below Lake Bowen's and Lake Blalock's full pool level.

Spartanburg Water initiated the lake level drawdown on December 1. While Lake Blalock is within the target range, Lake Bowen is not.

Over the past week, we have received 3.7 inches of rain in our watershed and more is projected over the next week. We expect this to require a longer time to reach our target level for Lake Bowen and, if projected wet weather patterns continue, it may actually prevent us from reaching or sustaining lower levels in Lake Bowen. According to the United States Geological Survey (USGS), over the last two weeks stream flows have been greater than 90 percent above normal when compared to the same days of the year throughout the historical record of measurement.

The drawdown provides our watershed management staff and adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Although not required, we continue to recommend that any boats be moved from the water during the drawdown period. Our wardens can answer any specific questions regarding boats on the lake.

Lake Alert: December 14 Drawdowns Update

You were recently informed that Spartanburg Water initiated a lake level drawdown project for both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock on December 1. The target range is 2.5-3 feet for both lakes. While Lake Blalock is within the target range, Lake Bowen is not.

Recent rain and snow events have caused Lake Bowen levels to fluctuate. We expect this to require a longer time to reach our target level for Lake Bowen and, if projected wet weather patterns continue, it may actually prevent us from reaching or sustaining lower levels in Lake Bowen. The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) is currently predicting a 40-50 percent chance of above normal precipitation.

The drawdown provides our watershed management staff and adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Although not required, we continue to recommend that any boats be moved from the water during the drawdown period. Our wardens can answer any specific questions regarding boats on the lake.

Lake Alert: Drawdown begins December 1 (November 30)

Spartanburg Water is initiating a lake level drawdown project for both Lake Bowen and Lake Blalock beginning Saturday, December 1. Important details:

This process will require the lower level to remain in place until the end of February, providing our watershed management staff and adjacent property owners an opportunity to examine the shoreline and perform other routine maintenance.

Although not required, we recommend that any boats be moved from the water during the drawdown. Our wardens can answer any specific questions regarding boats on the lake.

A lot of different variables may cause lake level fluctuations during the drawdown period, the most significant being heavy rainfall. This may result in a longer time to reach our target drawdown level and, if wet weather patterns persist, may actually prevent us from reaching or sustaining these lower levels in Lake Bowen.

The drawdown will slowly lower Lake Bowen's and Lake Blalock's standard, or "full pool," heights by approximately two-and-a-half to three feet.

For Lake Bowen FAQ's about watershed maintenance and lake levels, click [here](#).

For Lake Blalock FAQ's about watershed maintenance and lake levels, click [here](#).

For more information, visit spartanburgwater.org or call our Lake Bowen Wardens' office at (864) 592-2240.

Spartanburg Water's number-one priority continues to be the fulfillment of our mission to provide quality water in a reliable manner. Reliance on facts allows us to address this issue and get back to the business at hand: Ensuring the delivery of safe, quality water to more than 200,000 people.

Lake Alert: Land sale reports are false (November 2)

A small number of our customers have called to ask us about a rumor that Spartanburg Water has orchestrated the sale of an unspecified tract of land to an outside entity without the public's knowledge--in fact, we've heard reports that an environmental group--and even a local fish camp--have either bought or sold property in transactions behind closed doors. These claims are false and have no basis in fact.

To be clear, Spartanburg Water is not selling any property around any of our reservoirs, nor have we purchased any additional property.

Spartanburg Water's number-one priority continues to be the fulfillment of our mission to provide quality water in a reliable manner. Reliance on facts allows us to address this issue and get back to the business at hand: Ensuring the delivery of safe, quality water to more than 200,000 people.

Lake Alert: 120K more sunfish added Friday to restock reservoirs (October 19)

More than 120,000 sunfish were released into Lake Bowen and Municipal Reservoir Number One on Friday in the latest phase of a restocking partnership between the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources and Spartanburg Water.

Officials said on Friday afternoon that about 60,000 sunfish were released in Lake Bowen, and another 60,000 sunfish in Municipal Reservoir Number One. The restocking plan was first put into action with the release of 85,000 bluegills, more commonly known as bream, on October 8. 322,000 were released Thursday, October 18. SCDNR biologists recently conducted an assessment to determine what species would benefit from a restocking.

Last May, more than 200,000 fish died on both reservoirs.

"We're grateful to our partners at SCDNR for their support and encouragement in this continued strategy to restock our lakes," said Sue G. Schneider, Chief Executive Officer of Spartanburg Water. "This is another exciting step in a collaborative process that strengthens our watershed and brightens our collective future."

Spartanburg Water's reservoirs provide drinking water to a population of more than 200,000 people.

Lake Alert: Fish restocking continues Thursday on Lake Bowen, Reservoir #1 (October 18)

Fish restocking efforts continue on Lake Bowen and Reservoir #1 Thursday, October 18, officials from the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources have announced.

Thursday's release of approximately 100,000 red ear sunfish, 50,000 per location, signals the next step in SCDNR's partnership with Spartanburg Water to replenish the lakes. Last May, more than 200,000 fish, primarily bluegill, more commonly known as bream, died in both Lake Bowen and Municipal Reservoir #1.

This is the second release by SCDNR in the last 10 days, Spartanburg Water officials said. 85,000 bluegill were released into Lake Bowen on October 8 by SCDNR.

The restocking will not have an impact on any recreation planned for Thursday.

Lake Alert: Reservoir levels lowered for increased rainfall (October 10)

Spartanburg Water is taking steps to safely lower the water levels on Lake Bowen, Lake Blalock and Reservoir #1 today and through the next several days in preparation for potential problems caused by heavy rainfall from Hurricane Michael.

The S.C. Department of Health and Environmental Control advised owners and operators of reservoirs statewide October 9 to take a precautionary step by lowering water reserves to accommodate any additional rainfall.

Oversaturated soil has the potential to increase the runoff to South Carolina's ponds and lakes, according to DHEC.

Spartanburg Water officials will continue to monitor lake levels and weather patterns closely in order to ensure adequate supply of drinking water to its 200,000 customers.

Lake Alert: Fish restocking begins Tuesday on Lake Bown (October 8)

Fish restocking efforts will begin in earnest on Lake Bowen as early as Tuesday afternoon, officials from the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources have announced.

Tuesday's release of approximately 85,000 bluegill signals the next step in SCDNR's partnership with Spartanburg Water to replenish the lakes. Last May, more than 200,000 fish, primarily bluegill, more commonly known as bream, died in both Lake Bowen and Municipal Reservoir #1.

Dan Rankin, SCDNR's Upstate regional fisheries biologist, said the timing of Tuesday's release was based on availability—the agency partners with South Carolina-based hatcheries that supply restocking efforts like these.

"The great thing is that we're ready to begin the process and the fish are available," Rankin said. "This restock will focus solely on bluegill, which was the primary species in Lake Bowen affected by what occurred earlier in the spring."

Other species affected by the May fish loss may be stocked at a later date, Rankin said.

Ken Tuck, Spartanburg Water's Director of Water Treatment, said the precise location of the release will be dependent on the weather. A 30-percent chance of rain is likely in the later part of the afternoon.

"We're excited to have this great news and looking forward to continuing to work with our partners at SCDNR," Tuck said.

Last month, SCDNR biologists conducted an assessment of both lakes affected last May to determine what species would benefit from a restocking. Rankin and Tuck said that more updates about next steps, including any restocking efforts on Municipal Reservoir #1, will be made as plans are developed. The restocking will not have an impact on any recreation planned for Tuesday, both said.

"Thanks to SCDNR, important research is being conducted that will not only help us avoid another fish loss, but will also allow us to work together in this replenishment of fish stocks in our lakes," Sue G. Schneider, Spartanburg Water's Chief Executive Officer, said. "I'm confident in the path that we have forged together, and I'm honored to be a part of these efforts to ensure a bright future—one in which our precious natural resources are protected and conserved for our children and grandchildren."

Lake Alert: Fish restock study begins this week (September 10)

SCDNR researchers on hand to collect samples, determine next steps

A study to determine the need for a potential fish restocking effort on two of Spartanburg Water's reservoirs begins this week.

Researchers with the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources will conduct the first phase of an assessment on Lake Bowen and Municipal Reservoir Number One. A team of biologists will be collecting samples that will help the agency calculate a restocking rate following a major fish loss that occurred on both reservoirs last May.

Samples will be collected by a process known as "electrofishing," which injects a minor electrical charge into the water that temporarily stuns fish so that they can be collected and safely returned to the water with little stress or injury. Electrofishing is the safest and most effective method for these kinds of assessments.