

Water Restrictions Policy

Aim

The aim of this Policy is to provide a consistent approach to the communications, commencement and conclusion of water restrictions, when necessary.

Legislation

Water and Sewerage Industry Act 2008

Water and Sewerage Industry (General) Regulations 2009

Policy

Water restrictions are a necessary management tool for a well-managed water supply. TasWater manages and monitors more than 70 drinking water systems across Tasmania, and from time to time may need to implement water restrictions to reduce non-essential water use.¹ The decision to implement water restrictions within a system will be triggered by one or more of the following factors.²:

- **Infrastructure constraints** – where a water system cannot provide sufficient water to meet heightened customer demand. An example of this could be a temporary increase in population and resultant rise in water demand occurring during summer/tourist season
- **Water source constraints** – where there may be lower than acceptable river flows, aquifer, groundwater or dam levels from which water supplies are drawn. This can be due to environmental factors such as low rainfall and/or warmer than average temperatures
- **Water licence constraints** – TasWater must adhere to a range of water licences across the state as part of the *Water Management Act 1999*. These licences are regulated by the Department of Primary Industries, Water and Environment (DPIPWE), and in the event river levels fall to trigger levels referenced in a particular water licence, TasWater will call a restriction to ensure continuity, equitable access and competing interests for the water supply are met
- **Total fire ban days** – TasWater may call a restriction when water supply in a region is required to be used for firefighting purposes.

Depending on the specific conditions where a shortage of water supply is forecast to result in a failure to meet customer demand, TasWater will determine the stage of the water restrictions required. A description of the range of water restriction stages that may be implemented is provided below:

Stage 1 restrictions are intended improve the efficiency of water use practices by reducing non-essential use of water by approximately 20% of average consumption. Unnecessary water consumption during peak daily demand periods is restricted, whilst the amenity of residential and community assets is maintained.

Stage 2 restrictions are designed to reduce non-essential use of water by approximately 50% of average consumption. Non-essential residential and commercial use is limited to alternate days and watering of lawns is not permitted.

¹ Part 2 of the *Water and Sewerage Industry (General) Regulations 2009*

² Refer to section 7 of the Water Restrictions Guideline TASGDL07

Stage 3 restrictions are designed to reduce non-essential use of water by approximately 75% of average consumption. Watering of residential, public and commercial gardens is limited to levels intended to prevent long term vegetation damage and watering of lawns is not permitted.

Stage 4 restrictions allow only the consumption of water for essential public health purposes. All non-essential uses of water are prohibited.

Further details on permitted water use during water restrictions can be found in the Water Restrictions Guideline on the TasWater website.

Exemptions

Complete or part exemptions from any level of water restriction may be given by TasWater upon application.

Communication

Required actions (under *Water and Sewerage Industry (General) Regulations 2009*):

- Letter to the Minister of Primary Industries and Water informing of the restriction, within 21 days of commencement
- Advert/public notice in relevant community's paper
- Road signage (usually located at entrance/exit to affected townships)
- Media release to relevant media outlets
- Restriction clearly noted on the TasWater restrictions web page, including a copy of the letter to the Minister

Additional actions:

- Communications to the local council Mayor and General Manager
- Social media release including Twitter and Facebook posts
- Radio announcements (at the General Manager Corporate and Community Relations' discretion)
- Collateral to community (restriction posters and flyers).

Notification of the conclusion of the water restrictions will also be communicated through these channels.

Responsibilities

The Chief Executive Officer is responsible for ensuring overall compliance with the Policy.

References

Water Restrictions Guideline

Approved by the Chief Executive Officer on 23 November 2018



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Chief Executive Officer