

05/09/2016: Water Restrictions for Johannesburg

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he City of Johannesburg is required by the Department of Water and Sanitation to reduce its water usage by 15% with immediate effect

Level 2 water use restrictions (see below) have been in place in Johannesburg from November 2015. The City is now introducing a water restriction tariff on domestic users effective on water usage from September 2016. Why is this necessary?

The water levels in the Integrated Vaal River System have dropped below the threshold level of 60% - the Vaal Dam itself is at 35%. This is due to the ongoing drought and unseasonal heat and this triggers mandatory drought mitigation measures on water usage. In the Government Gazette of Friday 12 August 2016, the Director-General of the Department of Water and Sanitation, under delegated authority in terms of item 6 (1) of Schedule 3 to the National Water Act limited the taking of water from the Integrated Vaal River System by 15% on urban water use and 20% on irrigation water use – with immediate effect.

Johannesburg Water was notified by Rand Water, its bulk supplier, on 24 August that it would be reducing supply by 15% effective from 6 September 2016. This will be achieved by governing the flow of water through the bulk supply meters to Johannesburg Water. It will be managed in a dynamic manner as the supply areas have different sensitivity characteristics and a straight 15% across all meters will cause outages in some areas.

What are the existing restrictions?

Level-2 water use restrictions (which have been in place since Nov 15) according to section 44 (3) of the Water Services Bylaw states that all consumers are compelled:

- **not to water or irrigate their gardens between 06h00 and 18h00;**
- **only hand held hosepipes or buckets/watering cans are allowed outside these hours. Note that this is an additional requirement;**
- **Not to fill their swimming pools with municipal water; and**
- **Not to use hosepipes to wash their cars or to clean paved areas and driveways with water.**

If borehole water is being used this must be clearly advertised.

It is worth stating that over **40%** of water used in Gauteng is for gardening use. If householders comply with the restrictions above the 15% reduction target will easily be achieved. **The JMPD have been requested to police compliance.** Residents can report on non-compliance by phoning their 24/7 line 011 758 9650.

What are the water restriction tariffs that will now become effective?

When the tariffs were approved by the City for the 2016/17 year which commenced in July, water restriction tariffs were approved, to be implemented only if necessary. This is now the case, and these tariffs will apply on consumption from September until the drought situation is over.

The restriction tariffs are imposed in a stepped manner: 10% extra on consumption between 20000 litres and 30000 litres/month; 20% on consumption between 30000 and 40000 litres/month; and 30% on consumption above 40000 litres/month. This is illustrated in the table below. Note that 1 kilolitre = 1000 litres.

LEVEL 2 WATER RESTRICTION TARIFFS TO DOMESTIC CUSTOMERS

Kilolitres per connection per month	Normal Tariff (R/kl)	Level 2- Water Restrictions Tariff
		% Increase R' Increase (R/kl)
0-6	Free	0% R 0.00 Free
> 6-10	R 7.14	0% R 0.00 R 7.14
>10-15	R 12.07	0% R 0.00 R 12.07
>15-20	R 17.65	0% R 0.00 R 17.65
>20-30	R 24.03	10% R 2.40 R 26.43
>30-40	R 25.81	20% R 5.16 R 30.97
>40	R 32.27	30% R 9.68 R 41.95

What will happen if demand does not reduce by 15%?

If these measures are not effective in reducing demand by 15% then the Johannesburg water system will face the risk of outages. This has further knock-on effects as outages allow air into the system, which causes a hammer and an increased likelihood of bursts. So, we request residents to take this seriously.

What else is Johannesburg Water doing to contain water leakages?

JW has ongoing programmes to manage water leakages and usage, such as:

- Active leakage detection and repair teams and water network pressure modulation through 793 pressure reducing valves (PRVs) at strategic locations in the system, saving 29.6 billion litres per annum;
- The replacement of 900km of the water reticulation pipes which have the most bursts over a four (4) year period. This started in the 2013/14 financial year and is ahead of schedule;
 - The installation of low flush water cisterns in Soweto; and
- Johannesburg Water encourages the use of boreholes as an alternative source of water for non-potable purposes. The Borehole Water Association of Southern Africa (BWA) indicated that they have experienced an increase of between 15% and 20% in the demand for boreholes since the campaign in February 2016.

What is the weather prognosis?

We may well be in for a dry early spring, but there are prospects for good rains from late November/early

December. Should this happen and the Vaal system is able to recover, then these restrictions will be lifted.

Statement issued by:

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