

Sunday, 11 April 2010

WATER RESTRICTIONS EASED AGAIN

Garden watering times are to be increased to seven hours a week – with a further easing of water restrictions to come when the desalination plant begins producing fresh water at the end of this year.

Premier Mike Rann and Water Minister Paul Caica today visited the Adelaide Desalination Plant currently under construction to announce the latest water statistics and an easing in water restrictions.

“South Australians have responded incredibly well to the increased flexibility in watering times announced last November – to the point where consumption actually went down,” Mr Rann says.

“That means we can have great confidence that further increasing watering times is highly unlikely to cause problems.”

From midnight on 1 May, households can water their gardens, using a hand-held hose with trigger nozzle or drippers, for a maximum of seven hours a week – on any day of the week.

The current hours of watering - 7 am to 10 am - and 4 pm to 7 pm – remain in force and will only change again when daylight saving resumes in October.

Mr Rann says increased watering hours is a reasonable return for the great efforts of the vast majority of South Australians that have continued to observe restrictions and conserve this precious asset.

“So far this year, Adelaide has used about 45.8 billion litres of water which is about 3.6 billion litres less than at the same time last year, even after extending watering times to five hours a week,” he says.

“Our reservoir levels in the Mount Lofty Ranges are now at 61 per cent capacity, compared with the 10-year average of about 51 per cent at this time of the year.

“We have also reduced by an astonishing 84 per cent our reliance on River Murray water in this financial year - with just 16 billion litres of river water required to top up Adelaide’s reservoirs.

“That compares to last financial year, where we pumped 103.3 billion litres from the River Murray.

“Improved flow into the Murray-Darling Basin, despite the ongoing drought, has allowed us to already secure South Australia’s critical human needs water for 2010/11.

“We also have hundreds of billions of litres set aside from Queensland and NSW floodwaters, with more to come, to allocate between our critical human needs, the environment and primary producers.

“And with first water expected from the \$1.83 billion Adelaide Desalination Plant due in December, the Government is in a very strong position in terms of our State’s water security.”

Mr Caica says the latest Government analysis of figures confirms we are in a better position this year after improved rainfall and reduced consumption.

“South Australians have done a great job in observing the restrictions to conserve water and changing their behaviour to use water more efficiently both inside and outside the house,” he says.

“The community’s water-wise habits, along with the recent rainfall, better management of our storage capacity and improved inflows into the Murray-Darling Basin mean we can relax water restrictions.

“The ban on sprinklers remains in force but people can use drippers and hand-held hoses fitted with a trigger nozzle.”

Other restrictions remain, which means:

- Watering cans and buckets can be used at any time.
- The ban on sprinklers and other water systems remains in force.
- Watering permits for the elderly and disabled are unchanged.

“We will continue to reassess the situation on a month-by-month basis to ensure that the increased flexibility in watering times doesn’t lead to an unmanageable spike in consumption,” Mr Caica says.

“But I am confident South Australians will continue to do the right thing and comply with watering hours and times.”

Special exemptions for Port Pirie and the Whyalla iron oxide zone will remain to help residents manage dust impacts.

Eyre Peninsula, which adopted Level 3 Enhanced Water Restrictions in July this year, will also be able to use the more flexible watering times.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON METRO WATER SUPPLY

Adelaide’s year-to-date consumption (in megalitres) to 8am on 9 April:

2010: 45,866 ML
2009: 49,487
2008: 48,048
2007: 49,418
2006: 60,923
2005: 61,022
2004: 63,851
2003: 65,845
2002: 69,046

Corresponding period – 5 year average	50,412 ML
Corresponding period – Level 3 Restrictions Target	51,643 ML

Summer consumption

Consumption during Summer 2009-10 was about 2500 megalitres (or 2.5 billion litres) less when compared to our Summer consumption in 2008-09.

Adelaide cumulative consumption from 8am on 1 January to 8am on 9 April:

2010: 45,866 ML

2009: 49,487 ML

Natural intake into Adelaide's reservoirs

Since 8am Monday 5 April 2010 to 8am Friday April 9 we have received 583 ML (583 million litres) of natural intake.

Since 1 July 2009 to 8am Friday 9 April 2010 we have received 121,360 ML of natural intake.

For the entire 2008-09 financial year we only received 48,000 ML

Pumping

Since 1 July, 2009 to 8am 9 April, SA Water has pumped 16.9 billion litres from the River Murray to our reservoirs in order to maintain storage levels.

This compares to the 103.3 billion litres we had pumped to the same time last financial year.

Reservoir levels at 8am on 9 April historically:

2010: 61%

2009: 56%

2008: 49%

2007: 57%

2006: 57%

2005: 51%

2004: 45%

2003: 36%

2002: 48%

Adelaide's reservoir levels at 8am on 9 April

Reservoir	Volume (ML) 2010	2010 (%)	Volume (ML) 2009	2009 (%)
Mount Bold	21,961	48%	30,235	66%
Happy Valley	9,807	85%	9,807	85%
Millbrook	15,558	94%	14,048	85%
Kangaroo Creek	8,061	42%	5,525	29%
Hope Valley	2,421	88%	2,354	85%
Myponga	17,695	66%	13,981	52%
Warren	2,128	45%	3859	81%
South Para	33,135	74%	16988	38%
Barossa	4,339	96%	4375	97%
Little Para	5,883	28%	9,757	47%
Total	121,450 ML	61%	111,368 ML	56%