

News Release

www.premier.sa.gov.au



Premier Mike Rann

Hon John Hill

Acting Minister for Administrative Services

Hon Karlene Maywald

Minister for the River Murray

LOXTON: Monday, 27 November 2006

WATER RESTRICTIONS RISE ANOTHER LEVEL FROM JANUARY 1, 2007

State Cabinet, which is meeting in the Riverland today, has agreed to raise water restrictions for Adelaide and other River Murray water users to Level 3 on January 1, 2007 – which will reduce the time people can use sprinklers in their gardens from 36 hours a week - to six.

This will be an enhanced Level 3, broadly in line with restrictions currently in place in other States.

The announcement was made today by Premier Mike Rann, the Minister for the River Murray Karlene Maywald and Acting Water Minister, John Hill on the banks of the River Murray.

Premier Mike Rann says that while he is pleased many South Australians are heeding the message to reduce their watering habits, this severe nationwide drought looks set to roll on through a very hot summer.

“Much more needs to be done to save the little water we have allocated to us,” Mr Rann said.

“South Australians have a shared responsibility to do their bit during this drought.

“The reality is householders don’t need to use as much water as they do, and at the very least these restrictions will help stop wasteful practices.

“We want to make it as simple as possible for people to follow.

“The use of sprinklers will only be allowed on weekends from 5 am to 8 am, and 8 pm to 11 pm – even numbered residences on Saturday and odd-numbered on Sunday.

“We will be asking people to use their sprinklers either in the morning, or the evening – not both.

“We trust people will be responsible enough not to water during both periods.

“We will also be halving the hours people can use hand-held hoses, from the current level of 24 hours a day, to between 8 pm and 8 am.

“While these restrictions are much more onerous, we believe they are in sensible proportion to the drought conditions we face at present.”

Minister Karlene Maywald said that under the 1992 Murray Darling Basin agreement, in years of normal river flows, South Australia is guaranteed 1850 gigalitres a year from the upstream States.

Very recently, the Murray Darling Basin Commission revised down its predicted annual flow into South Australia to 1440 gigalitres, which continues the rapid deterioration in the forecast flows provided by the Commission.

“Historically, actual river flows have been significantly higher with a median annual flow of 4800 gigalitres,” Ms Maywald said.

“This has been an extremely difficult period for many of our irrigators, who are now operating on just 60 per cent of their water allocations. This drought will impact on the whole State economically.

“It is vitally important that we manage our future water demands and needs to the best of our abilities and water restrictions have become a fact of life for millions of Australians in other States in the past couple of years.

“That is why the Government established the Water Security Advisory Group, to give us the best advice about managing our water supplies.

“About 95 per cent of our State – domestically, industrially, commercially and agriculturally - survives on the water that we draw from the River Murray. It is a resource we must both protect and conserve, especially in these times of extraordinary drought,” Ms Maywald said.

Minister Hill said a major advertising campaign will begin soon to inform South Australians about the new restrictions about to be introduced.

“And while water consumers will be given a period of grace to get used to the higher level of restrictions, we will be warning people first and then issuing fines to those who abuse them,” Mr Hill said.

ENHANCED LEVEL 3 RESTRICTIONS FROM JANUARY 1, 2007

Domestic Gardens and Lawns

Hand-held hoses fitted with a trigger nozzle or drip-watering systems may be used on any day, but only before 8am or after 8pm.

Watering cans and buckets may be used at any time.

Sprinkler systems can be used on one day a week for three hours in the morning or for three hours in the evening in accordance with the following:

- Even numbered properties on Saturday between 5 am to 8 am and 8pm – 11pm.
- Odd numbered properties on Sunday between 5am – 8am and 8pm – 11pm.

Sprinklers cannot be used to water verges.

Sports Grounds and Recreation Facilities

Hand-held hoses fitted with a trigger nozzle may be used on any day but only before 8am or after 8pm.

Watering cans and buckets may be used at any time.

Sprinkler systems may be used once a week between the hours of 8pm and 8am.

The day of the week and time of operation for each of the sprinkler stations is to be determined in conjunction with SA Water and subject to a permit.

Testing of sprinklers will not be permitted without prior approval of SA Water.

Hard Surfaces

Water must not be used to wash paved or concreted areas, decking, walls or roofs of a building at any time unless it is necessary to do so to protect public health, ensure safety of people using the area, ensure the health and welfare of animals using the area or in case of accident, fire or other emergency.

Windows may be cleaned from a bucket filled directly from a tap.

Fountains, Ponds and Water Features

A fountain, pond or water feature that does not recycle water must not be operated and must not be topped up unless it supports fish.

The level of water in a fountain, pond or water feature that recycles water may be topped up only with water from a hand held hose or bucket.

Fountains, ponds and water features must not be refilled after emptying.

Swimming Pools and Spas

Existing pools and spas must not be refilled from empty.

The level of water in a swimming pool or spa that has been previously filled with water may be topped up or maintained only with water from a hand held hose or bucket.

New pools or spas may be filled only under the authority of a permit from SA Water. A permit will not be granted unless there is proof a cover has been purchased to prevent water loss through evaporation.

Children's wading pools must not be filled with more than 250 litres of water.

Washing Cars and Boats

Water must not be used to wash a vehicle except by means of a commercial car wash or a bucket filled directly from a tap.

Hoses are not to be used.

Boat owners are permitted to flush out motors and rinse off metal parts to prevent corrosion.

Farms or Rural Properties Using SA Water Supplies

A farm dam or tank must not be filled with water unless it is being used for domestic or stock consumption or fire fighting. A permit is required to fill a dam or tank for any other reason.

If a rainwater tank has been plumbed directly into a house by a licensed plumbing contractor it is acceptable to have a quantity of mains water in the tank.

Building/Construction Activities

Water must not be used for dust suppression and compaction unless it is applied from a hand held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle or directly from a motor vehicle designed and approved to carry/deposit water.

Commercial Nurseries and Garden Centres

Hand held hoses fitted with a trigger nozzle, watering cans, buckets and drip-watering systems may be used at any time to water plants in commercial nurseries and garden centres.

Sprinkler systems may be used between the hours of 8pm and 8am.

On days when the maximum temperature is forecast to exceed 30 degrees sprinkler systems may also be used between the hours of 1pm and 2pm.

Caravan and Camping Sites

Permits are required to water outside the garden and lawn guidelines.

Permits allow watering under the following conditions:

October – March

Grassed sites that have been damaged by cars, caravans and/or tents may be watered with a sprinkler for not more than 30 minutes on the day the area is vacated. If grassed areas are not being used then they may be watered with a sprinkler no more than once per week, for no more than 30 minutes at any time.

April – September

Grassed sites that have been damaged by cars, caravans and tents with a sprinkler no more than once per week at any time for no more than 30 minutes at any time.