

Tuesday, July 24, 2007

OUTDOOR WATERING SUSPENSION EXTENDED TO AUGUST

Minister for Water Security Karlene Maywald says temporary restrictions on outdoor household watering will continue through August, to help conserve water for summer.

“We are still asking people to turn off their outside taps and let nature keep gardens alive this winter,” Minister Maywald said. “The current restrictions will be reviewed again in late August.

“For ideas on how to ensure your garden can be managed with minimum impact, the Government is advising gardeners to speak to their local nursery or garden centre

“Continued restrictions are necessary because in 2006-07, the River Murray system experienced record low inflows for 11 consecutive months and it will take time for the system to recover.

“Rainfall and inflows in the River Murray system are promising but are still below-average so until we are confident that the drought is well and truly behind us, we need to continue to conserve water.”

Minister Maywald says while Adelaide Hills’ reservoirs are currently at 75 percent of capacity, compared with 52 percent at the same time last year, nearly half of the water was pumped in advance from the River Murray for use in 2007-08.

“The whole Murray-Darling Basin catchment needs sustained high inflows this winter and spring to begin the river’s recovery and for metropolitan restrictions to be relaxed,” she said.

Minister Maywald says Adelaide residents’ efforts to conserve water have been outstanding. From January 1 to July 20, water consumption has been 80 billion litres, compared with 102 billion litres during the 2003 drought.

She says the Government is continuing to work with the nursery and gardening industry, including landscapers and lawn contractors, on appropriate permits to minimise impacts on their businesses.

The current rules for outdoor watering, which are to be continued in August, include:

- The use of household sprinklers, hoses and watering systems, including drippers and any watering of lawns is banned.
- Buckets and watering cans will be allowed for outdoor trees, shrubs and plants.
- The use of greywater, by buckets and hoses, can continue in line with the requirements of the Department of Health.
- All Level 3 restrictions relating to nurseries, car washing, pools, spas, fountains and ponds will remain unchanged. There are no restrictions on the use of water from rainwater tanks or bores.

People who are unable to carry buckets or watering cans due to age or disability can apply for a permit from SA Water to allow the use of a hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle during certain hours.

For more information visit www.sawater.com.au or call the water restrictions hotline, 1800 130 952.