

Interim Water Conservation Measures

Frequently asked questions

(as at 1 March 2019)

After the recent rain, we are pleased to advise that from Friday 1 March, Council will introduce interim Water Conservation Measures.

Council reviewed all the relevant information on water use, dam levels and long-term forecasts before making the decision to move to Interim Water Conservation Measures. The most efficient use of sprinklers is during the early morning, late afternoon and overnight, the new conservation measures reflect this and are designed to achieve effective and efficient watering.

We know how precious our water is, so that's why we are taking a considered approach to ensure we have water security until the 3-point water security solution is delivered.

Council would like to thank everyone for the huge effort you have put in to ensure the community stuck to the previous restrictions – it helped get the city through a once-in-a-generation drought.

The significant rain we have had in recent weeks, and a solid strategy to appropriately conserve water, should mean we will have sufficient supply in the dam until the 3-point water security solution is delivered.

Quick facts about our city's water

- » Townsville residents use over four times more water per person than in most major cities
- » The average Townsville household uses 1,700 litres of water per day. Residents in Brisbane, Sydney and Melbourne use around 210 to 285 litres per day
- » Prior to 2018, 70% of Townsville's residential water supply was being used on our lawns and gardens

1. Why have we introduced Interim Water Conservation Measures?

As a city we need to reduce our water use to make our supply last longer. The more we reduce our consumption, the longer we can delay moving up to higher levels of restrictions.

Whilst our dam is currently at 100%, we know how precious our water is, so it is important to implement a considered, wise and sustainable approach towards water use; and ensure we have water security until the 3-point water security solution is delivered and once it is completed.

2. Why are there set times for watering?

The new system of three days a week on an odds/evens system from dusk to dawn (5pm – 8am) will provide people with greater flexibility to water their gardens and lawns when it suits them.

Have you ever been to a sporting event or concert where a lot of people are trying to use their phones at one time? The huge demand at once means that the network can't cope so it slows everything down. It's the same with our water network. The odd and evens system means that the water network can be prepared for peak times so that everyone is able to get the water they need.

3. Am I an odd or even numbered property?

Property addresses are categorised as 'odd' if:

- » the number of the property within the street is an odd number
E.g. *3 Jones Street* or *Unit 'X' / 17 Anywhere Crescent*;
- » there is no allocated street number, and the property's lot number is an odd number
E.g. *Lot 11, Smith Road*;
- » the address includes more than one street number and the first number is odd
E.g. *143 – 202 Walker Street*; or
- » there is no known street or lot number.

Property addresses are categorised as 'even' if:

- » the number of the property within the street is an even number
E.g. *2 Jones Street* or *Unit 'X' / 98 Anywhere Crescent*;
- » there is no allocated street number, and the property's lot number is an even number
E.g. *Lot 18, Smith Road*; or
- » the address includes more than one street number and the first number is even
E.g. *50 - 73 Long Street*.



5. What if my property has bore water?

Council does not have legislated power to impose water restrictions on bores. However, we still encourage you to conserve as much as possible even if you have a bore. Depending on where your bore water comes from you could find that as the level in the Ross River drops your bore may also run out.

6. Is there a restriction on when I can fill my pool?

Pools are not listed under the current Water Restriction Policy but may be included as an extra conservation measure if water consumption doesn't drop. We would encourage pool owners to use pool blankets to reduce the rate of evaporation from the pool.

7. Can I flush my boat motor at any time?

You can flush your boat motor at any time with a hose using a trigger nozzle attached. If you are flushing your boat motor though, please keep the water conservation measures in mind and do what you can to ensure that you're using as little water as you can.

8. Can I wash my car?

You can wash your car at anytime using a hose end trigger nozzle or pressure cleaner, but please keep the water conservation measures in mind and do what you can to ensure that you're using as little water as you can.

9. Will Water Restrictions ever be lifted, maybe after the new pipeline is completed?

The water conservation measures will remain in place while Council's 3-point water security solution is delivered. Further to that, Council will consult with the community to develop a permanent water conservation and saving program over the next 12 months.

Water conservation measures are used in other parts of Australia as a mechanism to encourage wise water use.

10. I pay my rates, including fees for water – should I not be able to use it when I want and when it suits me?

Water is a precious resource. Council's new interim water conservation measures strike the right balance between conserving the resource whilst still allowing residents the flexibility they need to use water when they need it.



It is important to keep in mind that gardens only need 4 – 6 hrs of watering a week to thrive. Watering needs of gardens reduces further following periods of rainfall.

11. Using the same allocated hours – can we nominate and decide on what times suit us?

Yes, the new measures are designed to provide for efficient watering.

12. In the interest of conserving water, the Council should abide by the same regulations and fix water leaks in the quickest time possible. Maybe additional resources should be allocated to ensure this is done.

Council already dedicates significant resources to repairing, maintaining and enhancing the water distribution network, and fixes leaks as a priority as we become aware of them.

13. Can we explore other options for capturing water, possible desalination plant for non-drinking water uses?

Council is delivering a 3-point water security solution following the work of the Townsville Water Security Taskforce which investigated all possible options for providing Townsville with long term water security. Desalination was looked at by the Water Taskforce and not found to be a viable option for Townsville.

Townsville City Council's 3-point water security solution will provide Townsville with long-term water security. The 3-point water security solution includes:

1. The new 1.8m diameter duplicate Haughton pipeline
2. A recycled water reuse scheme to provide recycled water for public open spaces and industrial use; and
3. The Water Smart Package which through rebates, will help residents become more water wise.