

Cape Town drought crisis reaching critical point

With dam levels now at 21,2% (storage levels) and the last 10% of water mostly not being useable, dam levels are effectively at 11,2%. The City of Cape Town has warned all residents and businesses to cut non-essential municipal water use immediately.



The City's Mayoral Committee is expected to recommend to council the implementation of Level four water restrictions on Tuesday, 16 May 2017. This would entail a ban on all use of municipal water for outside and non-essential purposes.

Water use 'catastrophically high'

"We are essentially saying that you are only allowed to use a bit of water for drinking, cooking and washing. We are reaching a critical point in this drought crisis. Although we continue to work non-stop to force consumption down, overall use remains catastrophically high. This is not a request. We have seen huge saving-efforts, but the unseasonably hot autumn is exacerbating the situation and we must all do more.

"Rain or shine, we are now at a point where all consumers must use below 100 litres per day. Stop flushing toilets when not necessary, shower for less than two minutes a day or use a wet cloth for a 'wipe-down', collect all would-be wasted water and use it to fill up toilet cisterns, among others," said the City's Mayoral Committee Member for Informal Settlements, Water and Waste Services; and Energy, Councillor Xanthea Limberg.

Dredging operations at Voëlvei, Theewaterskloof dams

Dredging operations have started at the Voëlvei Dam to prepare for low-level extraction of water. The city is engaging with the lead authority, the National Department of Water and Sanitation, as a matter of urgency to request dredging operations at Theewaterskloof Dam too.

The city continues with its pressure reduction programmes across the metro which forcibly reduces supply at a given time. Other emergency interventions are under way, and if required, the city will start to implement a lifeline supply of water across the metro.

"In a severe drought such as what we are dealing with, the only real immediate intervention is to cut usage. Over this coming week, we must bring consumption down with 100-million litres of water per day. The city also warns businesses to start implementing contingency and alternative water measures in their own operations," said Limberg.

Residents can contact the city via email to water@capetown.gov.za for queries or to report contraventions of the water restrictions (evidence should be provided to assist the city's enforcement efforts) or they can send an SMS to 31373.

For further information, go to www.capetown.gov.za/thinkwater.

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