

Tuesday 1 March 2016

Stage 1 Water Restrictions Activated For Little Bass System

South Gippsland Water is activating Stage 1 Water Restrictions for the townships of Poowong, Loch and Nyora following continuing dry climate conditions and resultant increased water demand.

Spring rainfall in 2015 has been confirmed as the region's lowest on record since the late 1930s. This has lessened reservoir inflows even when rain has fallen. The reservoir level for the Little Bass Water Supply System is currently at 51% (as at 26 February 2016).

As of Thursday 3 March 2016, Stage 1 Water Restrictions will apply to South Gippsland Water customers of the Little Bass Water Supply System, under uniform State Model Water Restriction By-laws.

The Little Bass Reservoir on the Little Bass River has a capacity of 218 ML and, in most years, allows water harvested in winter/spring to be stored and then supplied to customers in summer/autumn.

South Gippsland Water's Managing Director, Philippe du Plessis said "A dry spring, followed by minimal summer rainfall making its way from catchment to reservoir, continued water demand, and further dry weather conditions forecast, have combined to warrant the activation of Stage One Water Restrictions."

"This step is taken to alert the community that water storages are starting to get low. This means that customers connected to the reticulated water supply system within and surrounding the townships of Poowong, Loch and Nyora need to start activating more water efficient practices.

Warm and dry weather leads to pressure on the water supply system, with many homes using more water for showers and watering gardens and lawns, at the same time the sunshine evaporates water from the reservoirs.

The key difference between Stage 1 Water Restrictions and the everyday Permanent Water Saving Rules (that apply to all customers at all times) is the introduction of alternate days for watering gardens. This means odd numbered houses can water on odd dates of the month and even numbered houses can water on even numbered dates. Both odd and even numbered houses can water on the 31st of the month.

Mr du Plessis added, "These measures need to be put in place now. Stage 1 Water Restrictions are easy, common sense practices that will help households be more efficient with their use of water. If warm, dry conditions continue there is the possibility of higher level water restrictions in the near future".

Customers in the townships of Poowong, Loch and Nyora are reminded that South Gippsland Water is offering cash back on the purchase of new rainwater tanks and water efficient products or appliances. The initiative is associated with the roll-out of the Poowong, Loch and Nyora sewerage scheme. For further information visit www.sgwater.com.au/cashback or call 1300 851 636.

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ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

A quick snapshot of Stage 1 “Alert” Water Restrictions;

Gardens and Lawns	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Watering systems can only be used to water gardens and lawns between 6am–10am and 6pm–10pm on alternate days*. A bucket, watering can or a hand held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle can be used at any time.
Paving, Concrete and Other Hard Surfaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hosing is BANNED except for construction purposes, in an emergency, or to address a health or safety hazard.
Vehicles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vehicles can be washed using a high pressure cleaning device, or if not available a bucket, watering can or a hand held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle can be used at any time. A water efficient commercial car wash can be used to wash vehicles.
Pools and Spas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To fill or top up a new or existing pool or spa with a capacity 2,000 litres or less, a bucket, watering can, hand held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle or an automatic water top up device can be used. Pools and spas of greater than 2,000 litres capacity must not be filled unless a Water Conservation Plan has been submitted to South Gippsland Water and approved.
* Alternate Days	Alternate days means odd numbered houses can water on odd dates of the month and even numbered houses can water on even numbered dates. Both odd and even numbered houses can water on the 31st of the month. Where there is no house number the property is considered an even numbered house.

Additional water restriction areas include: public gardens and lawns, ponds, lakes, fountains, water features, pools, spas, tanks, water tankers, commercial car washes, food transport vehicles, commercial production of plants and/or animals.

Exemptions may be applied for the watering of public sporting grounds.

Interested customers can download full details for the staged restrictions and definitions from the South Gippsland Water website www.sgwater.com.au or contact South Gippsland Water’s Customer Service Team on 1300 851 636.

South Gippsland Water is encouraging all customers to consider simple water saving practices that they can activate at home such as:

- Using a half flush when flushing the toilet
- Fixing any leaking or dripping taps
- Ensuring hoses are fitted with a trigger nozzle and free of leaks
- Only running washing machine and dish washers when there is a full load to be washed
- Limiting shower time to four minutes
- Planting water wise garden plants and using mulch to hold moisture in garden beds
- Installing a pool cover
- Installing a water saving shower head, customers can have one delivered for FREE, simply register with South Gippsland Water Customer Service on 1300 851 636.

South Gippsland Water will continue to monitor all water storages and will activate restrictions on water supply systems as needed.