

Permanent Water Saving Rules FAQs

Are the Permanent Water Saving Rules a form of water restrictions? When will they end?

As the rules do restrict water use, they can be considered a basic form of restrictions, and – like restrictions – are enforceable under law. However, unlike staged (numbered) water restrictions, the water saving rules are permanent and don't have an end date. The permanent water saving rules are in place to help conserve our water supply into the future.

What is a high-pressure water cleaning device?

A high-pressure water cleaner is an electric or petrol-powered device that connects to a hose, forcing water out at high pressure for more effective cleaning. The rate of delivery must be 9 litres per minute or less.

What is a watering system?

A watering system is any automatic or manually operated system of sprinklers, drip hoses, weep hoses, etc. Even a simple garden sprinkler connected to a tap is considered a watering system.

The most efficient and effective watering system is a sub-surface drip hose, connected to a timer to water overnight. This ensures plants get water near their roots, and minimises water loss to evaporation.

Why can I only water at night or early in the morning?

It's more efficient and effective to water your garden when the sun goes down. Lower evaporation means water is more likely to get to plant roots.

When can water be used to clean hard surfaces?

Water can only be used to clean hard surfaces (including, driveways, paths, concrete, tiles, timber decking) when:

- where cleaning is required as a result of an accident, fire, health hazard, safety hazard or other emergency; or
- if staining to the surface has developed and then only once a season; or
- in the course of construction or renovation,

and then only by means of

- a high pressure water cleaning device;
- or if such a device is not available, a hand-held hose or a bucket.

Do the rules apply to bore, grey, rainwater or recycled water?

No, the Permanent Water Saving Rules apply only to drinking water supplied through our reticulation network.

Do Permanent Water Savings Rules apply during a fire emergency?

No.

Can I still wash my windows?

Yes. There are no restrictions on washing windows.

How should I wash my car?

Cars, boats and other vehicles can be washed at home at any time or any day, using

- a high-pressure water cleaner; or
- a hose fitted with a trigger nozzle; or
- a bucket or watering can.

The same rules apply to car dealerships.

Can I fill or top-up my pool or spa?

Yes. There are no restrictions on filling or topping up pools, spas or ponds under the Permanent Water Saving Rules.

What are the penalties for breaching the rules?

Breaching the Permanent Water Saving Rules can result in fines. For a first offence you can be fined over 10 [penalty units](#) and for a subsequent offence over 20 [penalty units](#).

How do I report a breach of the rules?

Permanent water saving rules are enforced under the Water Act (1989). If you witness a breach of the rules, please contact your water corporation with details of the offence. An authorised water officer will investigate and report. Official warnings and on-the-spot fines can be issued for offences, and in severe cases, prosecution may be sought.

Are there exemptions to Permanent Water Saving Rules?

Yes, water can be used at any time for:

- human health requirements;
- stock and animal health requirements;
- fire fighting; or
- the safety of, but not the cleaning of, vehicles or equipment.

In other special circumstances you can request an exemption from some permanent water saving rules or a stage of water restrictions. Some exemptions also require a Water Use Plan. Water Use Plans help to manage the use of water for specific purposes or for a specific stage of restrictions. They assist in maximising water-savings during water restrictions.

Who can apply for an exemption?

Applications for exemptions can be made from residential customers, on behalf of a business, company, industry or commercial or industrial organisation; or on behalf of a council, public or private school, a sportsground, a public garden or a tennis club.

How are applications made?

Applications must be made via our website. We will then consider the application within a reasonable period, and will either grant the application for approval (subject to any conditions the relevant water corporation considers appropriate) or refuse the application for approval.

What is a Water Use Plan?

A Water Use Plan outlines the measures that are already being used or that are planned on being used to assist in saving water. It controls the use of water for specific purposes or for a specific stage of restrictions. It helps to maximise water-savings during restrictions.

A Water Use Plan must be approved by the relevant water corporation prior to consideration of an exemption to some of the Permanent Water Saving Rules.