



CITY OF CAPE TOWN  
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA  
STAD KAAPSTAD

**LEVEL 3 WATER RESTRICTIONS (2018)**  
Effective from 1 December 2018

**FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**CITY OF CAPE TOWN**  
30 November 2018

*These questions and answers have been prepared to help you comply with the City of Cape Town's Level 3 water restrictions.*



**no drop**  
CERTIFICATION  
water use efficiency  
REGULATION



**green drop**  
CERTIFICATION  
waste water service  
REGULATION



**blue drop**  
CERTIFIED  
Excellent drinking water quality  
MANAGEMENT

**Disclaimer:**

This document is subject to frequent updating and should be regarded as a living document which aims to provide clarity on the revised Level 3 Water Restrictions (December 2018).

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## WHAT HAS CHANGED?

### 1. What changed between the Level 5 (from 1 October 2018) and the Level 3 restrictions (from 1 December 2018)?

#### SUMMARY OF KEY CHANGES: LEVEL 5 (October 2018) to LEVEL 3 (December 2018):

- Overall city water usage target increased from 500 million to 650 million litres per day.
- Personal water use limit increased from 70 to 105 litres per person per day.
- **Removal of percentage reduction restrictions for commercial, industrial and other non-residential water users.** All customers must adhere to the [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#) at all times and are strongly encouraged to use water responsibly.
- Removal of Level 5 restriction measures applicable to residential properties using more than 10 500 litres per month. All residents are strongly encouraged to continue to use water wisely.
- Watering with municipal drinking water using a bucket or watering can is allowed on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays before 09:00 or after 18:00 for a maximum of one hour on those days per property.
- Topping up or filling of swimming pools with municipal drinking water is allowed subject to the pool being covered with a non-permeable, solid pool cover when not in use; the recovery of backwash water; and the use of rainwater for pool topping up where practically possible.
- Vehicles, trailers, caravans and boats may be washed with municipal drinking water using a bucket.
- Commercial car washes may use municipal drinking water subject to industry best practice water conservation norms and the recycling of at least 50% of the water used.
- Spray parks may operate subject to strict management to minimise water use.
- Tariffs lowered to Level 3 water and sanitation tariffs.

## GENERAL

### 2. Where can I find the Level 3 Water Restrictions?

Level 3 Water Restriction measures (full document): [English](#) | [Afrikaans](#) | [isiXhosa](#)

Level 3 Water Restriction measures (overview): [English](#) | [Afrikaans](#) | [isiXhosa](#)

### 3. Is the City not acting too hastily to lower restrictions?

International experience shows that many countries impose water restrictions too late or remove them too early. This is why the City has chosen to impose Level 3 recovery restrictions and have not dropped restrictions to a lower level as rainfall for 2018 and 2019 remain uncertain.

Following the assessment at the end of the hydrological year in October 2018, the National Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS) has proposed a saving of between 10% and 20% for urban users to safeguard our water reserves for the year ahead.

However, the City is implementing Level 3 recovery restrictions which are designed to achieve a 30% reduction in usage as a precaution due to uncertainty in current weather patterns. Dam levels will be closely monitored and water users are strongly encouraged to retain and continue improving on the water use efficiencies achieved during the drought and to keep using water wisely.

### 4. Does the lowering of restrictions affect tariffs?

Yes, tariffs are linked to water restriction levels. Lower restrictions mean lower tariffs.

Cape Town's consumers have been carrying the burden of high tariffs which were imposed to specifically address an extreme situation. The crisis situation has changed and consumers cannot be expected to continue paying the higher tariffs.

Tariffs, which are still based on how much or little is used, have been lowered as follows:

<b>Residential water tariffs (including VAT)</b>			
<b>Step</b>	<b>Water (Kilolitres)</b>	<b>Level 5 Tariffs</b>	<b>Level 3 Tariffs</b>
1	0 ≤ 6 kℓ	R24,37	R15,73
2	> 6 ≤ 10,5 kℓ	R39,59	R22,38
3	>10,5 ≤ 35 kℓ	R60,25	R31,77
4	> 35 kℓ	R345	R69,76
<b>Commercial and industrial water tariffs (including VAT)</b>			
1	1 kℓ	R43,13	R28,82

<b>Residential sanitation tariffs (including VAT)</b>			
<b>Step</b>	<b>Sanitation (Kilolitres)</b>	<b>Level 5 Tariffs</b>	<b>Level 3 Tariffs</b>
1	0 ≤ 4,2 kℓ	R19,47	R13,82
2	> 4,2 ≤ 7,35 kℓ	R34,79	R19,67
3	>7,35 ≤ 24,5 kℓ	R51,92	R29,43
4	> 24,5 ≤ 35 kℓ	R124,30	R52,96
<b>Commercial and industrial sanitation tariffs (including VAT)</b>			
1	1 kℓ	R34,83	R25,89

For the complete Level 3 water tariffs, please see  
[Level 3 – water consumptive](#)  
[Level 3 – sanitation consumptive](#)

## 5. What savings can I expect?

This depends on your property and water use. Please see the following examples:

<b>Example 1: Residential property using 6 kl (6 000 ℓ) water per month</b>			
<b>Water and Sanitation tariffs (Domestic full)</b>	<b>Level 5 (until 30/11/2018) Rand (incl. VAT)</b>	<b>Level 3 (from 01/12/2018) Rand (incl. VAT)</b>	<b>Rand savings</b>
Water	R147,46	R94,94	R52,52
Sewerage	R82,65	R58,39	R24,26
Fixed basic delivery charge – 15 mm meter connection	R64,40	R64,40	Not applicable
<b>Total</b>	<b>R294,51</b>	<b>R217,73</b>	<b>R76,78</b>

<b>Example 2: Residential property using 12 kl (12 000 ℓ) water per month</b>			
<b>Water and Sanitation tariffs (Domestic full)</b>	<b>Level 5 (until 30/11/2018) Rand (incl. VAT)</b>	<b>Level 3 (from 01/12/2018) Rand (incl. VAT)</b>	<b>Rand savings</b>
Water	R418,12	R244,66	R173,46
Sewerage	R247,96	R152,22	R95,74
Fixed basic delivery charge – 20 mm meter connection	R115	R115	Not applicable
<b>Total</b>	<b>R781,08</b>	<b>R511,88</b>	<b>R269,20</b>

<b>Example 3: Commercial / Industrial property using 150 kl (150 000 ℓ) water per month</b>			
<b>Water and Sanitation tariffs (Commercial / Industrial)</b>	<b>Level 5 (until 30/11/2018) Rand (incl. VAT)</b>	<b>Level 3 (from 01/12/2018) Rand (incl. VAT)</b>	<b>Rand savings</b>
Water	R6 469,50	R4 323	R2 146,50
Sewerage	R4 963,28	R3 689,33	R1 273,95
Fixed basic delivery charge – 80 mm meter connection	R1 840	R1 840	Not applicable
<b>Total</b>	<b>R13 272,78</b>	<b>R9 852,33</b>	<b>R3 420,45</b>

#### **6. When will I see a lower water cost in my municipal account?**

The change to the tariffs will be applicable from 1 December 2018. The lower tariff will thus be reflected for usage in municipal accounts after this date. The tariff is still based on how much or how little water is used: the more one uses, the more one pays.

#### **7. How will it work when a bill reflects usage under Level 5 and Level 3 tariffs between two months?**

The City will work out the daily average consumption at the property for the applicable billing period and will charge the consumption during November for the days of consumption at Level 5 tariffs and consumption during December at Level 3 tariffs on a pro rata basis.

#### **8. Why are you penalising people in the lower steps of the tariff who are using less? It looks like the high users are being rewarded by getting the biggest reductions?**

Note that it is not the case that there is a bigger 'discount' at the higher steps. Rather, there was a significantly bigger increase for those steps when water restrictions were initially increased. Those who are using at the highest (step 4) tariff pay over four times more than those using at the lowest (step 1) tariff. The lowest users on step 1 pay R54, 03 less per kilolitre than the highest users on step 4.

#### **9. Was the City just making money off its residents with the Level 5 tariff?**

No. The City does not budget to make a profit, but to recover the total cost to supply the water service. The higher tariff levels were introduced to deter customers from using too much water during the drought crisis and to prevent the City from running out of water. Higher tariffs are also required when less water is sold to generate the income necessary to deliver water services.

## 10. Does the fixed charge remain?

Yes, the fixed charge is a permanent feature now and unrelated to the restriction level. This charge, which is based on the size of the water connection to your property, helps bring greater certainty to the income that the City receives, namely, income that is not based on usage that goes up or down. As we recover from the drought, with further lowering of tariffs being a possibility, the cost of water will incrementally reduce and therefore the cost of performing this service and delivering safe, reliable drinking water to households and businesses needs to be responsibly safeguarded and not be dependent on revenue solely related to the quantity of water consumed – whether water usage is higher or lower.

## 11. Will advanced pressure management continue now that water restrictions are being lowered?

We will continue with pressure management as it helps to reduce stress on the City's water reticulation network. Lower pressure is the new normal. During Level 3 recovery restrictions there will however be increased pressure at critical points in the system and this will reduce the impact of pressure management in the peak hours especially. Ongoing pressure management is also part of our commitment to being a more water-wise city into the future.

Through our efforts thus far, we are saving up to 70 million litres of water per day. We have created many pressure zones which enable us to increasingly manage pressure in an automated manner.

It is essential that we continue all of our interventions to lower water usage and to prevent unnecessary leaks and bursts in our pipe infrastructure. This will be in line with the emphasis on water demand management and conservation that we have always had in place.

The [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#) stipulates that the City does not guarantee pressure at a certain level.

Property owners, building management agents and body corporates should adhere to the building regulations by installing pumps and water storage systems to sustain their internal usage. These systems must be compliant with City and South African National Standards regulations in both their design and operation.

If you live in or operate from a multi-storey building, ensure that the water supply system, which includes booster pumps and rooftop storage, is in working order in compliance with the [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#).

## 12. How does the City enforce restrictions?

Water inspectors monitor compliance with the restriction measures as well as the [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#) and they issue spot fines where applicable.

Residents are normally our most vigilant enforcers and we want you to please report, with appropriate proof, anyone who does not adhere to water restrictions, using the following methods:

- Call [0860 103 089](tel:0860103089)
- Email [water@capetown.gov.za](mailto:water@capetown.gov.za)
- SMS 31373 (max of 160 characters)
- WhatsApp 063 407 3699

## 13. Do any other water regulations apply?

Yes, all water regulations contained in the [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#) and in national water and sanitation legislation apply. Find out more on [Know your water regulations](#).

#### **14. Who is responsible for complying with water restrictions: a landlord or a tenant?**

It depends. According to the [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#), the property owner is responsible for all water installations on the property (and the efficiency of these), while the consumer is responsible for any wastage or abuse of water.

It is thus encouraged that an owner and tenant work closely together to ensure that the [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#) is adhered to and that water usage is done in an efficient manner.

#### **15. How do I apply for an exemption?**

See our website for how to [apply for exemption from water restrictions](#). Exemptions will only be approved where a well-motivated application is received.

#### **16. I need to apply for exemption for more than one property. Do I need to submit an application for each property or may I submit a single application?**

You may submit one application for multiple properties as long as the application is relevant to all properties. For example, a nursery business with multiple outlets across the city may submit a single application.

Please include a list of all erf numbers and addresses as an annexure.

#### **17. If I have been granted water restrictions exemption previously do I need to reapply?**

Unless revoked, exemptions issued under levels 4b (1 July 2017), 5 (3 September 2017), 6 (1 January 2018), 6B (1 February 2018) and 5 (1 October 2018) restrictions still apply under Level 3 (1 December 2018).

### **RESIDENTIAL PROPERTIES**

#### **18. Does the 10 500 litres per month limit for residential properties still apply?**

No, this only applies at higher restriction levels. However, a personal limit of 105 litres per person per day is applicable under Level 3 restrictions.

As we are in a water-scarce region and weather patterns remain uncertain, all residents are still strongly encouraged to use water responsibly and to retain the high levels of water use efficiency achieved during the drought. Higher usage also means higher tariffs and costs.

#### **19. Will you now stop the roll out of water management devices (WMDs) for water restrictions contraventions?**

No new WMDs will be installed for water restriction contraventions under Level 3 water restrictions.

#### **20. A water management device (WMD) was installed at my house because we used too much water during the drought. Can my WMD now be set to a higher level?**

Yes, the City will reset WMDs for residents who had a WMD installed due to a previous water restriction contravention and who are not in arrears with municipal payments.

You do not need to apply for this. However, the resetting can't be implemented instantaneously due to volumes and the fact that it is a manual process and it is not possible to reset WMDs remotely or automatically. It will thus take time to get to all the applicable properties.

Please note that this only applies to WMDs installed due to a previous water restriction contraventions and does not apply to indigent customers or customers in arrears where WMDs have been installed as part of the City's debt management processes.

## **21. If I want to retain my current water management device setting, what should I do?**

Customers, who are satisfied with their current setting and wish to retain it, are requested to contact the City via the following methods.

- Call [0860 103 089](tel:0860103089) (choose option 2: water related faults)
- Email [water@capetown.gov.za](mailto:water@capetown.gov.za)

Please note that if you do not contact the City with your request, your current water management device setting will be lifted and the setting will be on free-flow. As always when contacting the City, insist on a reference number which helps you to track the progress with your request.

## **22. How do I apply for an increased drinking water quota for my household?**

The 10 500 litres per month limit for residential properties does not apply under Level 3 restrictions. It is thus no longer necessary to apply for a quota increase.

If you have a water management device (WMD) installed, you will be eligible to have the setting increased. See question above.

If there is a spike in your water consumption, it could be as a result of an underground or undetected leak. Please see our [guide on how to find and fix leaks on your property](#).

## **23. Are children's play pools allowed under Level 3 restrictions?**

Yes. However, you are strongly encouraged to only use small play pools. Please limit the amount of water used and recycle the water for flushing toilets.

## **24. Do the water restrictions affect spray parks?**

Spray parks are allowed to operate but must be strictly managed to minimise water wastage.

City-operated spray parks are designed with water efficiency in mind and use less water than a swimming pool.

## **25. How can I still be water wise while being allowed to use more water?**

Most of the water saving habits which Capetonians established during the drought crisis still makes sense going forward. For example, we've learned that it doesn't take a huge amount of water to keep a body clean, the yellow can mellow a bit, and using waste/grey water from our washing is fine for flushing toilets.

Moving from 70 to 105 litres per person per day means that we can now use water a bit more freely, and each household can figure out what that means for them e.g. a bit more for cooking and cleaning, for washing a vehicle, or for growing some potted herbs or veggies. We can still be efficient and do the same (or more) with less water, but now we don't have to do without.

The impact of climate change means that we can never be sure how much rainfall we'll get in future so it's best to use keep using water productively not wastefully. It costs more to have taps running if the water is not being used efficiently. Don't use more than you need, and re-use what you can.

### **Water-wise tips:**

- Take short, stop-start showers
- Flush toilet with washing water when necessary
- [Find and fix leaks](#)
- Don't let taps run too long or at full flow

- Only wash what's really necessary
- Install water-efficient taps, showers and toilets
- Fit a pool cover to reduce evaporation
- Harvest and store rainwater from gutters
- Always [Think Water](#)

## NON-RESIDENTIAL CUSTOMERS

### **26. Are commercial, industrial and other non-residential customers still required to reduce their consumption by 40% relative to their pre-drought consumption levels?**

No, this restriction only applies to higher restriction levels. Nevertheless, all customers are strongly encouraged to use water efficiently and to prevent wastage.

### **27. How do I apply for an increased quota of drinking water for my organisation?**

It is no longer necessary to apply for a quota increase. Percentage reduction restrictions for non-residential properties are not applicable under Level 3 restrictions.

### **28. What other water conservation regulations apply to non-residential properties?**

All water conservation and demand management regulations contained in Schedule 1 of the [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#) must be complied with.

Please note that all major water users (those using more than 10 000 kilolitres of municipal drinking water per year), excluding those comprising multiple dwelling units, must undertake an annual water audit. The audit must be carried out before mid-July each year and the audit report must be available for inspection.

Find out more on [Know your water regulations](#).

The [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#) also stipulates that the City does not guarantee pressure at a certain level.

Property owners, building management agents and body corporates should adhere to the building regulations where applicable by installing pumps and water storage systems to sustain their internal usage. These systems must be compliant with City and South African National Standards regulations in both their design and operation.

If you live in or operate from a multi-storey building, ensure that the water supply system, which includes booster pumps and rooftop storage, is in working order in compliance with the [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#), where applicable.

### **29. We are introducing alternative water sources in our business/operation now, like using rainwater, groundwater or recycling greywater. What are the rules related to this?**

All alternative water systems which are connected to a water installation are subject to approval from the City. The abstraction and storage of ground- and surface water is also subject to authorisation and registration by the National Department of Water and Sanitation (DWS).

Use of alternative water needs to be well managed and regulated as alternative water systems pose potentially serious health and environmental risks, including contamination of the drinking water supply.

See these links for City's website:

- [Apply to sink a borehole or wellpoint](#)
- [Register a borehole or wellpoint](#)

- [Apply to install and use an alternative water system](#)
- [Water By-law \(2010\)](#) and the [Amendment \(2018\)](#)

## IRRIGATION AND WATERING

### 30. Can I now water my garden with municipal drinking water?

Limited watering with municipal drinking water is allowed under Level 3 restrictions. However, this is subject to the 105 litres per day personal limit and the following restrictions apply:

- only using a bucket or watering can
- only irrigate on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays before 09:00 or after 18:00 for a maximum of one hour per day per property
- no watering within 24 hours of rainfall that provides adequate soil saturation
- no use of hosepipes or any sprinkler systems allowed

### 31. May I use my irrigation system and hosepipe if connected to borehole water?

Yes. However, borehole/well point water users are strongly encouraged to follow the same watering times as applicable to municipal drinking water use and water must be used efficiently to avoid wastage and evaporation. Boreholes and well points must be registered and correct signage must be displayed for all alternative water sources such as boreholes, well points, greywater systems and rainwater tanks.

### 32. I am physically disabled/elderly and I can't water my garden with buckets or a watering can. Do I qualify for exemption from the irrigation restrictions?

You may [apply for exemption from water restrictions](#) and your application will be considered on merit. Your application must include a motivation and supporting documents about your disability. Copies of your previous three months' water bill showing reasonable consumption will further support your application.

However, we strongly encourage you to consider irrigation solutions within the current water restrictions where possible. Please consider:

- using a smaller watering can
- planting drought-resistant plants
- asking a friend or an employee to water your garden
- installing an irrigation system that uses an alternative water source such as greywater; harvested rain water; borehole water; and preferably an efficient irrigation system e.g. drip irrigation or using moisture retention methods.

## SWIMMING POOLS

### 33. May I fill and top up my swimming pool with municipal drinking water?

Limited topping up of pools with municipal drinking water is allowed under Level 3 restrictions. However, this is subject to the 105 litres per day personal limit and the following conditions:

- the pool must be covered with a non-permeable solid pool cover when not in use
- no automatic top-up mechanisms allowed
- backwash water must be recovered where practically possible
- rainwater must be collected for topping up pools, where practically possible

### **34. What type of pool cover is required?**

The pool cover must be solid and non-permeable to prevent evaporation from the pool. Pool netting and covers made of shade cloth are not sufficient to prevent evaporation.

### **35. May I top up my pool with municipal drinking water if a chemical/liquid pool cover is used?**

No. Chemical/liquid pool covers are less effective in preventing evaporation in windy conditions, than solid pool covers. Level 3 water restrictions require the pool to be covered by a solid, non-permeable pool cover if municipal drinking water is used.

However, chemical/liquid pool covers may be used in addition to a solid cover to help limit evaporation from the pool while the pool is in use and uncovered.

### **36. How do I use rainwater to top up my pool?**

Rainwater can be directed from your roof downpipe to a storage tank or directly to your pool. A simple plastic sleeve connected to the gutter and leading into the pool is a common method.

### **37. May I use a hosepipe to top-up my swimming pool?**

Yes. The restriction on hosepipe use does not apply to swimming pools.

Boreholes and well points must be registered and correct signage must be displayed for all alternative water sources such as boreholes, well points, greywater systems and rainwater tanks.

How can I operate a water-wise pool?

- Refit the pool cover immediately after use
- Use rainwater tanks to harvest rainwater for the pool
- Use a backwash tank to treat and recycle backwash water
- Use borehole water to top up your pool (check the suitability of your borehole water first)
- Backwash only when necessary
- Check your pool, pool piping and pump system for leaks
- Don't operate fountains or water features
- Protect your pool from the wind. Use landscaping and wind barriers to reduce wind evaporation
- Don't overheat your pool
- Do not overfill your pool. Only fill to mid-weir level

## **WASHING VEHICLES AND BOATS**

### **38. Am I allowed to wash my car with municipal drinking water?**

Vehicles, trailers, caravans and boats may be washed with municipal drinking water only if using a bucket. However, this is subject to the 105 litres per day personal limit.

### **39. Must commercial car washes use a bucket?**

No. However, commercial car washes may only use municipal drinking water if they comply with industry best practice water conservation norms and recycle at least 50% of the water used.

### **40. May owners of boats rinse and flush their motors after fishing?**

Yes, flushing of motors is permitted within the ambit of the Level 3 restriction measures. Where possible, please use non-drinking water otherwise this is subject to the 105 litres per day personal limit.

**41. May someone who uses borehole water wash their car in the allocated times?**

Yes. There are no allocated times for car washing but please stick to washing during the water-wise time of the day. This is when the wind is not gusting or during the hottest times of the day.

We encourage you to rather use a bucket. If you do use a hosepipe, then please ensure that it is fitted with an automatic self-closing device.