

## Watercare's stage 1 water restrictions: General FAQs

### Why is Auckland's water supply strained?

Since the start of 2020, the region has received significantly less rainfall than normal. This is having a big impact on our water supply. On 15 April 2020, the total volume of water stored in our dams dropped below 50 per cent for the first time in more than 25 years. We need to preserve what's left.

### When were restrictions introduced?

Saturday 16 May 2020

### Who was responsible for introducing restrictions?

Auckland Council introduced them and we are enforcing them

### Who do the restrictions apply to?

All properties connected to Auckland's metropolitan water supply network

Click [here](#) to view the metropolitan water supply map

### Who is exempt from restrictions?

- The restrictions do not apply to the rural townships of Waiuku, Helensville, Bombay, Murawai, Snells Algies, Wellsford and Warkworth because they have local water sources.
- The restrictions do not apply if you are using non-potable/untreated water and are therefore not connected to the metropolitan supply network.

### How long will restrictions be in place?

Until further notice

### It rained recently, is that the end of the drought?

No. We need significant rainfall over several weeks to have any impact on our water stores.

### Why were restrictions introduced in winter 2020?

Around New Zealand, many communities have water restrictions in summer to reduce 'peak' demand. This is when communities may want to use more water than their local treatment plants can produce. Auckland's 2020 drought was severe, and we don't know how long its effects will last. Therefore, we needed to implement water restrictions to ensure we make the best-use of the water we have left in our dams – until the drought breaks.

### Why haven't you found new water sources over the past 20 years?

We have been staying ahead of population growth by expanding our Waikato Water Treatment Plant. We have secured new water sources for our rural communities. For example, we secured a bore and built a water treatment plant in Warkworth.

### Can Watercare build a new dam?

Our focus has been on bringing two former water sources – Hays Creek Dam in Papakura and a bore in Pukekohe – back into service. We've also completed the Waikato 50 plant which takes our peak production from the Waikato River to 225 million litres a day. A new pump station in Papakura has also been built to enable the pipeline to deliver that amount to Auckland, via the Redoubt Rd storage reservoirs.

### Why can't Watercare just take more water from the Waikato River?

The completion of the Waikato 50 plant in July 2021 takes our peak production from the Waikato River from 175 to 225 million litres a day. If we did not have the Waikato River, our water supply would be critically low.

**We've increased our take of Waikato River water but by how much?**

When the Waikato Water Treatment Plant first opened in 2002, it was able to produce up to 50 million litres a day. Since then, it has been expanded seven times, increasing its capacity to 75 million litres a day, 90 million litres a day, 110 million litres a day, 125 million litres a day, 150 million litres a day, 165 million litres a day and 175 million litres a day. The completion of the Waikato 50 plant in July 2021 takes our peak production to 225 million litres a day.

**When Auckland began receiving water from the Waikato River, you said the city would never have water supply or drought issues again. What happened?**

We said the Waikato Water Treatment Plant would ensure Auckland never runs out of water. That still holds true. Over the past 12 months, it has typically provided more than 30 per cent of the city's water.

**What is Watercare's plan for the ongoing supply of water to the Auckland region?**

Our [water strategy](#) outlines our infrastructure planning over the next 20 years.

**If I have a question related to the drought or water restrictions, who do I contact?**

Please email your enquiry to [save-water@water.co.nz](mailto:save-water@water.co.nz)