

# **EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL**

**Wednesday 22 January 2020**

# Extraordinary Council Meeting

Wednesday, 22 January 2020

## Items of Business

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# 4 Your Natural and Built Environment

## What we are trying to achieve

A connected, sustainable, accessible community and environment that is protected now and into the future.

## What the result will be

We will have:

- Effective management and maintenance of essential water, waste and sewer infrastructure
- A community that is prepared for natural events and climate change
- Sustainable and environmentally sensitive development outcomes that consider the impact on the natural environment
- Accessible transport network for our communities
- Infrastructure provision and maintenance that meets community expectations and needs
- Well planned communities that are linked to encourage and manage growth
- Accessible and protected waterways, foreshores, beaches and bushlands
- An environment that is protected and conserved for future generations
- Renewable energy options that are understood and accessible by the community

## How we will get there

- 4.1 Provide (appropriate) infrastructure and services including water cycle management, waste management, and sewer management
- 4.2 Aim to minimise the impact of natural events and climate change, for example, floods, bushfires and coastal erosion
- 4.3 Facilitate development that is compatible with the natural and built environment
- 4.4 Plan for integrated transport systems that help people get around and link our communities
- 4.5 Plan for integrated and connected communities across the Port Macquarie-Hastings area
- 4.6 Restore and protect natural areas
- 4.7 Provide leadership in the development of renewable energy opportunities
- 4.8 Increase awareness of issues affecting our environment, including the preservation of flora and fauna

INFORMATION GUIDE  
Issued January 2020

# Level 4

## SEVERE



## WATER RESTRICTIONS NOW IN FORCE\*

### RESIDENTIAL

#### There is a total ban on all outdoor residential water use.

- > Only use buckets or watering cans containing recycled, grey water or rain water on gardens.
- > **NO** handheld hoses, sprinklers, micro-sprays or drip irrigation systems.
- > **NO** car or boat washing. Boat motor flushing is only permitted for 3 minutes using a container to recycle flushing water.
- > **NO** cleaning driveways, paths or hardstand areas.
- > **NO** swimming pool top-ups with town water. Consult your pool supplier for advice on managing your pool equipment.
- > New pools may be filled to 300mm below the skimmer box to prevent structural damage via written exemption approval from Port Macquarie-Hastings Council.
- > **NO** exemptions for establishing new turf are available from Council.

All restrictions apply to any rain water tank where mains water top up or automatic changeover devices are in use or tank is filled via Mobile Water Tanker delivery. No restriction applies to rain water collected in rain water tanks.

### PUBLIC AREAS

- > Sporting fields can only use recycled water.
- > Community gardens can only use recycled or rain water.
- > There is a **total ban** on top-ups for fountains and garden ponds.
- > Public swimming pool top-ups are permitted provided water-use reduction measures are undertaken.
- > Public outdoor showers, fish cleaning tables and boat cleaning areas will be disabled.

### SAVE WATER INSIDE TOO!

Please be water-wise and consider how you can save water indoors:

- > Check you have no dripping taps, toilets or plumbing leaks.
- > Run full loads of washing or adjust the water level on the washing machine.
- > Limit showers to 2-3 minutes.

Find more water saving tips on our website at [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-tips](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-tips).

\* Water Restriction levels current on the date printed above. Please check the website below for updates.

#### **PENALTIES WILL APPLY FOR DELIBERATE BREACHES OF WATER RESTRICTIONS**

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council adopted revised water restriction trigger levels and the *Uniform Regional Water Restrictions* at the Ordinary Council meeting of 20 July 2016. For further information on water restrictions visit:

**[pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)**

INFORMATION GUIDE  
Issued January 2020

# Level 4

## SEVERE



## WATER RESTRICTIONS NOW IN FORCE\*

### COMMERCIAL

#### Water use is limited to critical commercial use only.

- > **Nurseries, market gardens, landscapers and turf suppliers:** Must apply for written exemption from Council for water use, demonstrating how water saving will be achieved and why alternate water sources are not available.
- > **Bowling Greens and golf courses:** Recycled water only.
- > **Construction industry:** Minimise all water use on the work site. Hoses must be fitted with a hand-held cut-off trigger or control nozzle that shuts off when released.
- > **Public pools:** Top ups are permitted with water-use reduction measures.
- > **Commercial cleaning:** Permitted for health and safety reasons only or via written exemption from Council.
- > **Car, boat and caravan dealers and detailers:** Use of recycled water or handwashing with buckets is permitted for safety reasons e.g. windscreens and lights.
- > **Washing of buses, taxis and emergency services vehicles:** Use of recycled water or handwashing with buckets is permitted for safety reasons e.g. windscreens and lights.
- > **Commercial car wash:** Facilities must use recycled water where available. Use of drinking water for commercial car wash requires a Water Savings Action Plan (WSAP) and written exemption from Council.
- > **Industries requiring water for hygiene purposes:** No restrictions for commercial kitchens, garbage trucks, food transport etc. to ensure health standards are maintained.
- > **Washing down of hard areas, driveways, roofs, walls and paths:** Permitted for health and safety reasons only with written exemption from Council. Efficient high pressure, low flow rate cleaners with trigger control are to be used.
- > **Primary Production:** Washing animals using a bucket or handheld hose fitted with cut-off trigger or control nozzle is permitted for health and safety reasons only. Clean pet pens using recycled or greywater only. Recycled Water is approved for livestock (excluding pigs and cleaning of milking equipment) and will require a site management plan to be approved. Recycled Water has limited daily availability. Information on site management plans is available from Council's Water Supply Team.
- > **Tourist accommodation:** Use of water outside is not permitted. Pool top-ups are permitted subject to implementation of WSAP and written exemption from Council.
- > **Road works and land developments:** Recycled water only. Use of drinking water requires a WSAP and written exemption from Council.

For all other commercial use, refer to the **RESIDENTIAL Water Restrictions Information Guide**.

### SAVE WATER INSIDE TOO!

Please be water-wise and consider how you can save water indoors:

- > Create a **Water Savings Action Plan** for your business. Visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/wsap](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/wsap).
- > Check you have no dripping taps, toilets or plumbing leaks.
- > Consider how your business can collect and reuse grey water and implement production water saving options.
- > Find more water saving tips on our website at [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-tips](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-tips).

\* Water Restriction levels current on the date printed above. Please check the website below for updates.

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**[pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)**



## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Issued January 2020



# Level 4

## SEVERE



## WATER RESTRICTIONS NOW IN FORCE\*

### 1. Why do we have water restrictions?

Water restriction levels are determined based on an assessment of daily customer demand and the storage volume available in our dams. Predicted weather forecasts and the flow and quality of the rivers are also taken into consideration when implementing water restrictions.

### 2. Who is affected by water restrictions?

Everyone who uses the water supply is affected. This includes all residents, visitors, community groups, commercial businesses, industries and public services, including Council. Restrictions for residents and visitors are different to commercial enterprises. Clearly defined water restrictions are outlined for businesses that take into account their need for water to continue their operations. Emergency services, including fire brigades, SES, police and ambulance operations are exempt from water restrictions at all levels.

**Commercial Restrictions** will come into force **Tuesday 25 February 2020** following a period where commercial users can review their needs and discuss appropriate water saving measures with Council.

### 3. How does Council determine when to implement Water Restrictions and why have we adopted Level 3 Water Restrictions?

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council adopted the *2014 Uniform Regional Water Restrictions and revised water restriction trigger levels*, at the Ordinary Council Meeting on 20 July 2016. The introduction of water restriction levels is based on a range of factors including:

- available flow in the Hastings River at Koree Island,
- daily demands of the customers
- combined storage levels (as a percentage of full supply capacity) in Council's Port Macquarie and Cowarra off-creek storage dams see: [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/dam-levels](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/dam-levels)
- long term weather forecasts.

See Council's website for trigger levels [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-restrictions](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-restrictions)

Level 4 Water Restrictions have been introduced in the Hastings based on the current storage levels falling below the 35% trigger point of the combined dam storage level in Council's Port Macquarie and Cowarra off-creek storage dams.

With our region experiencing intense drought conditions, limited rain falling in the catchment area and low river flows, Council have been able to pump only limited water from the Hastings River to transfer into the two storage dams.

Several months of above average rainfall would be needed to see a recovery from current long-term rainfall deficiencies, particularly in the upper catchment area, to have an impact on river levels at Koree Island.

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Once river levels are sufficient for pumping, water quality targets for nutrients and turbidity in the river water must be met before pumping to the dam can commence. In times of low water availability, water restrictions can reduce water demands and conserve the amount of water currently in storage. Community support to conserve our scarce water resources is critical.

In order to get our storage levels back to 45% (the Level 3 trigger), we would need to be able to pump continuously from the river for approximately 4 months.

## RESIDENTIAL

**4. What days can I water?**

There is a **total ban** on all outdoor residential water use.

Fixed hoses, water sprinklers, micro-sprays and drip irrigation systems are banned.

Only buckets or watering cans containing rain water, recycled or greywater can be used on gardens. See Question 17 below for more information on greywater.

**5. Can I clean my windows, walls, roofs and gutters?**

**No.** Use of water to clean windows, walls, roofs and gutters is **banned**. Brooms, vacuum cleaners or air blowers can be used to remove loose material.

**6. Can I clean driveways, paths and hardstand areas?**

**No.** Brooms, vacuum cleaners or air blowers can be used to remove loose material. A hose with cut-off trigger or control nozzle can only be used to clean a driveway or path if it is required as a result of an accident, fire, health hazard or other emergency with written exemption from Council.

**7. Can I top up my pool and spa?**

**No.** Drinking water cannot be used to top up pools or spas. Collected rainwater can be used to top up pools and pool covers are strongly recommended. Talk to your pool supplier about how to maintain your pool during restrictions and reduce water loss from your pool.

Pools cannot be emptied and refilled unless required by Health Regulations or to repair leaks.

**8. I have just installed a pool - can I fill it?**

New pools may be filled to a maximum of 300mm below the skimmer box to prevent structural damage via written exemption from Council. This includes any existing Development Application approvals where the pool has not yet been constructed. Exemptions are available online or at local Council offices.

**9. Can I wash out my garbage bins?**

**Yes.** For health and safety reasons, bins can be washed using recycled or greywater and preferably on a grass or gravel area to reduce pollution of any stormwater system or waterway. Any pollution could incur penalties as defined under the Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997.

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**10. Can I fill my fountain or garden pond?**

**No.** Operation or top up is not permitted except to sustain fish life. Handheld hoses must be fitted with a water cut-off trigger or control nozzle.

Installation and filling of new facilities is **banned**.

**11. Can I wash my car or boat?**

Domestic car and boat washing is not permitted.

Council recommends the use of commercial car wash stations which use high pressure cleaning units and recycled water.

Boat motor flushing is only permitted for 3 minutes using a container to recycle flushing water.

**12. Can I wash my dog and other animals?**

**Yes.** This is permitted with a bucket or handheld hose, fitted with a water cut-off trigger or control nozzle for health and safety reasons only.

**13. Can I wash my pet pens?**

**Yes,** using recycled or greywater.

**14. Can new turf be laid and watered?**

New turf can be laid, however no external use of drinking water is permitted.

Residents can use recycled or greywater on gardens.

**15. I have access to bore water. Can I use this water under Water Restrictions?**

**Yes.** Water used from a bore is not subject to Council water restrictions.

A current licence from Water NSW is required to use bore water. For online applications visit the website [waternsw.com.au/customer-service/water-licensing/applications-and-fees#stay](http://waternsw.com.au/customer-service/water-licensing/applications-and-fees#stay)

If you require a "Bore Water in Use" sign to indicate that you are using bore water on your property during water restrictions, an application is available from Council Offices or online:

[pmhc.nsw.gov.au/About-Us/Forms-Permits/Water-and-Sewer-Service](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/About-Us/Forms-Permits/Water-and-Sewer-Service) (proof of licence is required).

**16. I have a rainwater tank. Can I use this water under Water Restrictions?**

Rainwater tanks that are topped-up from the drinking water provided through Councils main supply or delivered by a commercial water carter must still be used in accordance with water restrictions.

Standalone tanks with rainwater (only) that are not connected or using drinking water are exempt from water restrictions.

**17. Can I use greywater or recycled water to water my garden?**

'Greywater' is wastewater from washing machines, laundry tubs, showers, hand basins and baths, but does not include wastewater from a kitchen, toilet, urinal or bidet.

Yes, re-using domestic greywater on your garden and pot-plants can save many litres of drinking water each day. However, to minimise the risk of illness and/or pollution, the following advice is provided for the safe reuse of greywater:

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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- Due to health risks greywater must be used directly and not stored or used to water edible plants.
- Care must be taken when re-using greywater to ensure the watering location is away from, and does not impact upon, watercourses, neighbouring properties and environmentally sensitive areas.
- Greywater cannot be disposed of into stormwater systems.
- Water from kitchen sinks and dishwashers is not recommended for greywater re-use as it often contains grease and food particles and may have high pH levels.
- Manual bucketing of small quantities (i.e. shower or sink) can be used on garden or grass.

Greywater diversion devices and greywater treatment systems can only be installed if certain conditions are met. For advice on system and approval requirements contact Council's Environmental Health Officers on (02) 6581 8111.

**18. If I am connected to the recycled water scheme, am I exempt from Water Restrictions when using recycled water?**

**No.** At this stage, recycled water is only available to some commercial businesses in the Port Macquarie CBD and Industrial area.

Port Macquarie-Hastings Council has not commenced operation of the recycled water scheme to all residential areas, so drinking water is currently supplied through the recycled water (lilac) pipes to residential areas and as such, usage is subject to current restrictions.

**19. Our dam is dry and we have no other water source. Can we use water carted from water suppliers to water our horses or the town water supply?**

At the moment, if you have absolutely no other water source, you can use bought water, or access the town water supply, for pets and horses. We are currently taking requests for access to our limited recycled water for livestock (excluding pigs and cleaning of milking equipment) which requires a site management plan to be approved. We are investigating alternate sources of water for stock watering, and will update here and publicise if and when that is available. Information on site management plans is available from Council's Water Supply Team.

## PUBLIC SPACES

**20. Will public outdoor showers, fish cleaning tables and boat cleaning areas be available for use?**

**No.** Public outdoor showers, fish cleaning tables and boat cleaning areas will be disabled.

Boat owners are encouraged to use a commercial car wash. Boat motor flushing is only permitted for 3 minutes using a container to recycle flushing water.

**21. Can our local sporting fields and public gardens be watered?**

To reduce demands on our drinking water, Council uses recycled water to irrigate many of the local sporting fields, public gardens and open space facilities.

**Sporting fields and public gardens** may only use recycled water; **Community Gardens** can only use recycled or tank water that is not connected to the drinking water supply.

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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**22. Why are water restrictions for commercial activities different to those for everyone else?**

Approximately 85% of the water consumption in the Port Macquarie-Hastings area is consumed by residential users. Restricting commercial usage alone will not achieve the savings in relation to that achieved by restricting residential usage. However, Council is working with businesses to identify areas of water saving economy.

Some businesses are reliant on water usage to make a living e.g. landscape gardeners, cleaners and concreters.

## COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL BUSINESSES

**23. What Water Restriction requirements have been introduced for the commercial and business activities?**

Water use is limited to critical commercial use only e.g. high-pressure water cleaning businesses. Water-saving efficiencies are strongly encouraged.

Dust suppression is permitted with recycled water only. Non-production outdoor use is subject to **residential restrictions**.

The following restrictions are in place for commercial operators:

- > **Nurseries, market gardens, landscapers and turf suppliers:** Must apply for written exemption from Council for water use, demonstrating how water saving will be achieved and why alternate water sources are not available.
- > **Bowling Greens and golf courses:** Recycled water only.
- > **Construction industry:** Minimise all water use on the work site. Hoses must be fitted with a hand-held cut-off trigger or control nozzle that shuts off when released.
- > **Public pools:** Top ups are permitted with water-use reduction measures.
- > **Commercial cleaning:** Permitted for health and safety reasons only or via written exemption from Council.
- > **Car, boat and caravan dealers and detailers:** Use of recycled water or handwashing with buckets is permitted for safety reasons e.g. windscreens and lights.
- > **Washing of buses, taxis and emergency services vehicles:** Use of recycled water or handwashing with buckets is permitted for safety reasons e.g. windscreens and lights.
- > **Commercial car wash:** Facilities must use recycled water where available. Use of drinking water for commercial car wash requires a Water Savings Action Plan (WSAP) and written exemption from Council.
- > **Industries requiring water for hygiene purposes:** No restrictions for commercial kitchens, garbage trucks, food transport etc. to ensure health standards are maintained.
- > **Washing down of hard areas, driveways, roofs, walls and paths:** Permitted for health and safety reasons only with written exemption from Council. Efficient high pressure, low flow rate cleaners with trigger control are to be used.
- > **Primary Production:** Washing animals using a bucket or handheld hose fitted with cut-off trigger or control nozzle is permitted for health and safety reasons only. Clean pet pens using recycled

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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or greywater only. Recycled Water is approved for livestock (excluding pigs and cleaning of milking equipment) and will require a site management plan to be approved. Recycled Water has limited daily availability. Information on site management plans is available from Council's Water Supply Team.

- > **Tourist accommodation:** Use of water outside is not permitted. Pool top-ups are permitted subject to implementation of WSAP and written exemption from Council.
- > **Road works and land developments:** Recycled water only. Use of drinking water requires a WSAP and written exemption from Council.

If you are interested in exploring the use of recycled water, please contact Council to obtain a licence or find out more information about utilising recycled water from licensed operators.

For more information on the exemption process and WSAP's see Q24 and Q25 below.

**24. How can I apply for a water restriction exemption?**

We try hard to balance the needs of our customers with the need to protect the water supply during one of the worst droughts on record.

We know that sometimes you may have special circumstances that make it difficult to follow the water restrictions. You can apply for an exemption by downloading or completing the online form on Council's website at [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-exemption](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-exemption). Exemption requests will be assessed on an individual basis.

**25. What is a Water Saving Action Plan (WSAP)**

Businesses determined by Council as the highest water users will be notified and required to complete a WSAP.

Individual businesses have different needs and uses for water. The WSAP provides an opportunity to identify the specific water requirements of each business. These requirements will be reviewed by Council.

Council will work with local businesses through the WSAP to identify areas of proactive water saving.

**BREACHES, PENALTIES AND REPORTING****26. What are the penalties for breaking the rules?**

Under the relevant provisions of the Local Government Act & Regulations, Council can take legal action against a person or corporation found breaching water restrictions.

Customers who fail to comply can have their water supply restricted, or face "On-The-Spot" fines and/ or prosecution in the Local Court. The penalties include: "On-The-Spot" fines of \$220, and up to \$2,200, if prosecuted through the Local Court. In addition, the same penalties also apply for water theft and unauthorised access of water from Council's mains and hydrants.

**27. Will Council be conducting patrols to enforce water restrictions?**

Yes, Council actively conducts patrols every day. Council Rangers will investigate reported breaches of water restrictions. Council will continue to rely on the public's support and assistance in the monitoring of water restrictions by reporting any suspected breaches.

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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**28. What do I do if I see someone wasting water or breaching water restrictions?**

Report breaches or misuse of water to Council on 6581 8111 between 8am to 5pm, or after hours on 6583 2225. Anonymous calls cannot be followed up.

**29. I have seen someone taking water from a fire hydrant. Is this permitted?**

No, only NSW Fire and Rescue and Rural Fire Brigade members actively engaged in firefighting are permitted to access fire hydrants. Should you observe anyone accessing or drawing water from a fire hydrant, please contact Council immediately on 6581 8111 between 8am to 5pm, or after hours on 6583 2225.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

**30. How long are water restrictions likely to last?**

Due to the variability of rainfall and climate conditions it is difficult to predict, however as an example, to recover 15% overall capacity in the storage dams while meeting usage demands, it would take around 4 months of consecutive pumping from the Hastings River.

This scenario also relies on sufficient rainfall to maintain river levels above the environmental flow limit as well as acceptable water quality. Extended periods of extraction such as this are rare and it is envisaged that recovery of the dam storage volumes will take place over a longer period of time.

**31. When will Level 4 Water Restrictions be lifted/eased?**

Level 4 water restrictions will be lifted to Level 3 when the total combined storage in the Port Macquarie and Cowarra Dams has recovered to above 45% capacity, the level and flow in the Hastings River at Koree Island extraction point allows for consistent pumping, and climatic conditions are favourable.

Council's combined storage must exceed 70% before all water restrictions can be lifted.

Sufficient scope must be allowed for judgements to be made in any lifting/easing of restrictions.

**32. Why didn't you bring in water restrictions sooner?**

Our water supplies are dependent on quality river flows and during periods of extended dry weather, water storage facilities are unable to be replenished. This means we are reliant on the capacity of the water storage and we can't top it up.

However, when water can be pumped from the river, 100% storage capacity is maintained, usage demands can be met and water restrictions are not necessary. Conversely, when pumping is not possible and water usage cannot be met, water restrictions are introduced.

Council moved to Level 1 Water Restrictions on 15 April 2019 (total combined storage <70%) and Level 2 Water Restrictions on 2 September 2019 (total combined storage <60%) in accordance with the adopted water restriction trigger levels detailed in our Water Supply Policy 2015, amended December 2018. In response to these restrictions Council established an education campaign for residents and visitors of the area to encourage water conservation.

Council resolved at the November 2019 Ordinary Council meeting to expedite the introduction of Level 3 Water Restrictions (approximately 26 days early) due to the ongoing drought and bushfire activity.

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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Since this time, Council have been working closely with the State Government and other regional Council's to investigate short term water supply options including desalination plants and ground water options and is continuing our education campaign to reduce water consumption.

**33. Are we likely to go into Emergency water restrictions?**

**EMERGENCY** water restrictions are likely to come into force if current drought conditions continue and trigger point reaches below 25% of total combined dam storage levels.

**34. Will we run out of water?**

Our emergency water supply plans rely on everyone adhering to water restrictions. There is a risk our water will become even more scarce if we cannot limit water use.

**35. Wasn't Cowarra Dam built to help drought-proof the Hastings?**

Yes. Cowarra Dam is the back-up water supply when we are unable to pump from the Hastings River. The capacity in Cowarra Dam is utilised to top up Port Macquarie Dam and delay the need to implement restrictions.

**36. Why doesn't Council simply pump dirty river water after rainfall events to fill the off-creek storage dams, when there is plenty of flow in the river?**

After rain events, the amount of sediment and turbidity in the river can create nutrient rich 'dirty' water, which, if sent to our dams, could cause algal growth and ultimately result in the deterioration of our water quality (regarding taste and odour) to a point where we could not use the dams to supply water to the community.

It would require a significant capital investment for Council to construct water treatment facilities to remove sediments, turbidity and nutrients from 'dirty' river water. However, such options continue to be considered and reviewed as part of ongoing planning for the local water supply scheme.

**37. What is Council doing to help conserve water in its day-to-day activities?**

Council recognises that it must lead by example and clearly demonstrate this in the area of practical water conservation and reuse.

Council also endeavours to ensure that all its current activities are conducted in accordance with best practice. Council's Recycled Water Treatment Plant provides an alternative water supply for many of Council's public and open space facilities. This water originates from the Port Macquarie wastewater treatment plant. The Recycled Water Treatment Plant further treats the water, producing up to 2 million litres per day of highly treated water for irrigation, toilet flushing and other approved commercial water uses, rather than using our town (drinking) water supply.

Residences at Thrumster and new development areas of Lake Cathie and Bonny Hills are part of the Council's Recycled Water Scheme, and have been built with a dual plumbing system allowing for use of recycled water once it becomes available. The Recycled Water Plant is operational and producing recycled water, however Council is still building the pipeline that is required to transfer recycled water to the Thrumster area. **Therefore recycled water is not yet supplied to these areas.**

For more information please visit our website: [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/recycled-water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/recycled-water)

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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**38. What is being done to ensure that water restrictions are minimised in the future?**

Council is constantly reviewing future water supply needs and available resources: a detailed 30-year capital works program has been developed to meet anticipated water supply needs. All of these investigations and planning activities involve the basic concepts of both the affordable and sustainable development of our natural resources.

A number of the proposals currently being investigated include:

- Upgrade of water treatment facilities.
- Stormwater and Recycled Water reuse schemes in urban areas.
- Water sensitive and efficient urban design.
- Additional off-creek dam storage capacity.

In the meantime, Council will actively continue its public education and water conservation campaigns, so that eventually water conservation practices will become a normal part of life.

Following on from Council's Development Control Plans, the NSW BASIX is in place to ensure that the principles of both water and energy efficiency are incorporated into all future residential developments. This includes the provision of water tanks and water efficient appliances in all new houses.

**39. Would better planning / water management prevent the need for water restrictions?**

Council is managing our water supply every day. Our employees monitor river flows, groundwater levels and water usage across the region, and check weather forecasts, long range weather information and rainfall patterns. The water storages and water treatment plants are operated for peak efficiency.

The Hastings region has never run out of water and has an excellent history in provision of high quality drinking water for our population.

A massive infrastructure injection (for example, building a much larger water storage facility) is not affordable or feasible for our population size at this point in time. However, we continue to plan for and investigate short and long term strategic projects to provide for our future water security. You can read more about this on our website at [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/future-water-management](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/future-water-management)

**40. Would we have run out of water if development had been restricted within the region?**

Water supply is considered as part of Council's Integrated Water Cycle Management Strategy to ensure the area has a sufficient water supply capacity to provide for our growing population. This Strategy is renewed every 8 years and Council has engaged NSW Public Works Advisory to review and update this strategy, outlining our long-term plans for water and sewer schemes and strategic stormwater management.

As the population increases, the secure yield of the water supply system must also increase. Secure yield is defined as the highest annual water demand that can be supplied from our water supply system whilst meeting specific design rules. Water security is achieved if the secure yield of a water supply is at least equal to the unrestricted dry year annual demand. Council's current water supply system is appropriate for our growing population as determined by the NSW Office of Water under the NSW Guidelines on Assuring Future Urban Water Security.

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

PORT MACQUARIE - HASTINGS COUNCIL

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

January 2020

**41. Why doesn't Council install desalination plants to obtain all the water we need from the ocean?**

Council are currently working with the State Government to investigate desalination plants and are specifically considering mobile desalination plants for more immediate use. Council remains committed to investigating a range of options to support both our short and long term water supply needs.

The further development of alternate water schemes in the Port Macquarie-Hastings area will assist Council in reducing current demands for drinking water supplies (approximately 10% reduction and possibly more).

**42. Where does our drinking water come from?**

Our water supply is extracted from the Hastings River at Council's extraction point at Koree Island, west of Wauchope. Water is pumped to the Port Macquarie and Cowarra Dams when flow and water quality readings for nutrients and turbidity are satisfactory. Drinking water for the Port Macquarie-Hastings area is stored in the operational Port Macquarie Dam - 2,500ML (off Ocean Drive in Port Macquarie) and in the back up supply at Cowarra Dam - 10,000ML (King Creek area, east of Wauchope).

**43. What standards or guidelines apply to our drinking water?**

Council, as the designated water utility for the Port Macquarie-Hastings area, is charged with supplying water of adequate volume for the community to a standard which meets or exceeds the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2011.

**44. What are 'environmental river flows'? Why are they important to the health of our rivers and how do they impact on our water supply system?**

Environmental river flows, as defined by Government agencies, are the minimum river flows, which must be preserved to maintain river health, for downstream river users and the aquatic environment. These minimum river flows are based on statistics derived from actual stream flow data. This includes adequate river levels and flows to maintain the following:

- Fish passage downstream of the pumping station
- Water depth over aquatic plants and animals, and
- Salinity and other water quality parameters at acceptable limits.

Council's water supply pumping activities from the Hastings River to fill the Port Macquarie and Cowarra Off-Creek Storage Dams are regulated to preserve minimum environmental river flows.

During times of drought when periods of low river flows can occur, Council's off-creek storage dams are used to meet water supply needs, until river flows return to normal. Extended periods of drought require Council to implement staged water restrictions to reduce non-essential water usage and preserve the storage capacity of the dams.

**45. Restrictions often seem to start when tourist season is over. Does visitor water use cause low water supply?**

**No.** Decreased water supply is caused by low rainfall, which causes the river flows to drop. Over recent years, it has been typical for dry hot weather and increased evaporation to cause river levels to drop around the end of summer (into February). This is coincidentally the end of the holiday season.

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

January 2020



Although it might seem that higher water use would cause scarcity of water, this isn't the case with a river flow water supply. If the river is flowing above the pump levels, we keep pumping water to top up the water storages. Water restrictions would not make any difference, because even if everyone lowered their water use, we would still be able to keep the water storage full. The water we don't use flows downstream, and out to sea eventually.

**46. Do water restrictions affect our water bills? Will they be lowered because of the introduction of water restrictions?**

Your water rates include fixed amounts for water infrastructure and service, which includes not only the water supply system (water storages, water treatment plants, pumps, delivery pipes and mains), but also the sewerage system (pipes, mains and pumps that carry greywater and stormwater away from your property, sewage treatment plants). This amount does not change when water restrictions are in force.

You are also charged a fee for the water you use, so if you use less during the water restriction period, you will be charged a lesser amount for that part of your water account.

**47. Why have I seen Council staff allowing water to escape from hydrants and go down the drain during water restrictions?**

This process is called "flushing" and it is an essential management tool used by water utilities whenever required. Delivering fresh, clean water that is a food grade product is a complex undertaking, and one we don't often consider when we turn on a tap. On its path to your home from the water storage, occasionally our water quality detectors report that chlorine levels in the water have dropped. This has serious implications for water hygiene. Alternatively, sometimes mains that carry the water to you break, and the water becomes contaminated, again this is an issue for water quality and hygiene.

The way we fix this is to repair pipes then flush the dirty water to minimise contamination and in the process draw chlorine through the pipework. This is to ensure water will meet the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines. We undertake this task as a requirement of our Drinking Water Management Plan.

During water restrictions, we make every possible effort to reduce the amount of water we need to flush, while ensuring your water quality meets the required hygiene standard. It's not possible to economically capture this water for reuse, because the cost of providing the special equipment and truck and transport of that water, along with the time it would add to these jobs, is prohibitive.

**48. What can I do to help save water?**

We all have a role to play in conserving our water supply. From checking for leaks inside and out, to using the last of the washing up water to rinse our recyclables. We can also have a conversation with the whole family to ensure everyone understands the importance of saving this precious resource. By encouraging kids to use the half flush in the toilet or to turn the tap off while they clean their teeth will help to ensure early water saving habits.

Visit council's website for further information at [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-tips](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water-tips).

Last updated: 20 January 2020 03:32 PM

For further information on water restrictions visit [pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water](http://pmhc.nsw.gov.au/water)

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Level 4 water restrictions  
**APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION****1. APPLICANT DETAILS**

First name:  Surname:

Company Name (if applicable):

Post Address:

Email address:  Daytime phone number:

- ☐ Have you had previous discussion(s) with a member of Council staff on this matter?  
(Please contact Council on 6581 8111 should you wish to discuss this application in person)

**2. PROPERTY DETAILS**

☐ Commercial / Industrial ☐ Residential ☐ Other

If Other please specify:

Street number:  Street name:

Suburb:

State:  Postcode:

**3. DETAILS OF EXEMPTION REQUEST**

Date from:  Date to:

Time from:  Time to:

Details:

**Are alternative water sources available?**

☐ No ☐ Yes. Please specify:

**What water saving measures are in place?****General water saving measures**

- ☐ I, and my team (if relevant), have identified water saving initiatives within the business by reviewing work processes
- ☐ I will fix/have fixed leaks within my business premises (eg leaking toilets, dripping taps)
- ☐ I use/will use water efficient (4 star and above WELS rated) appliances, fixtures or fittings in my business premises
- ☐ I will install/have installed aerators on all taps
- ☐ I will install/have installed dual flush toilets within my business premises
- ☐ I have fitted all hoses with a trigger nozzle
- ☐ I have educated my staff and contractors on the importance of complying with water restrictions and any exemption conditions



**Nurseries, gardens and landscaping (if applicable)**

- ☐ I have reduced evaporation by top-dressing vegetation or soil (eg with compost, mulch or manure)
- ☐ I will ensure/have ensured that my irrigation system is efficient (eg it is adjusted for weather changes and plant growth, uses rain or soil sensors, no overspray on concrete)
- ☐ I use/will use clippings on lawns to retain moisture
- ☐ I use/ will use drought-tolerant plants (eg native species)

**Building sites (if applicable)**

- ☐ I will prepare/have prepared a water savings plan for the project and ensure that staff and contractors adhere to it
- ☐ I will reduce/have reduced evaporation by retaining as much vegetation as possible during construction
- ☐ I require workers to use a broom rather than a hose to clean paths and gutters
- ☐ I am using buckets of water to clean tools instead of running water
- ☐ I am ensuring no unnecessary hosing of paths, driveways, concrete or paved areas

**Commercial kitchens (if applicable)**

- ☐ I will install/have installed manually operated pre-rinse spray guns
- ☐ I will install/have installed water efficient appliances (4 star and above WELS rated) fixtures and fittings in my business premises
- ☐ I don't use running water to defrost frozen goods

**Cleaning - Health, safety and hygiene, buildings, vehicles, boats or equipment (if applicable)**

- ☐ I have installed hoses fitted with a trigger nozzle or high pressure cleaning equipment with a maximum flow rate of 20 litres per minute
- ☐ A broom is used wherever possible
- ☐ Hoses or taps are not left unattended

Other water saving measures that I have put in place (please specify if applicable):

**4. AUTHORITY**

Signature:

Date:

A letter detailing the conditions of the exemption will be forwarded to the postal address above.

Please return this form to Port Macquarie-Hastings Council via one of the following methods:

- Deliver to Port Macquarie, Wauchope or Laurieton Customer Service Centres
- Post to PO Box 84, Port Macquarie, NSW 2444
- Email to [council@pmhc.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@pmhc.nsw.gov.au)

**OFFICE USE ONLY**

PIN:

CRM:

RECOMMENDATIONS:



**BUSINESS WATER SAVINGS ACTION PLAN (WSAP)**PORT MACQUARIE-HASTINGS  
COUNCIL

pnhc.nsw.gov.au

**PURPOSE**

Business water consumers have an important role to play in conserving our water and reducing the likelihood that greater restrictions will be introduced. This Business Water Savings Action Plan (WSAP) is a tool to assist business users in assessing their current water use levels and implementing changes that can be made to improve their water efficiencies. Potential benefits of completing a WSAP include:

- Improved management of water consumption resulting in reduced water-related costs;
- Change in staff behaviours and strengthened reputation;
- Development of a plan for the continuity of activities, where appropriate, in times of drought;
- Support of broad community efforts in reducing the likelihood that greater restrictions are introduced in the future.

**APPLICATION**

This WSAP form is general in nature in order to apply broadly to business water customers in the Port Macquarie-Hastings LGA. Council recognises that many customers have already introduced water saving measures or practices, and have installed updated toilets, showers, tapware and machines. This information should be included in the WSAP.

Not all questions will relate to all organisations (use N/A where not applicable). When completing the WSAP, organisations will need to examine their water-related activities specific to their own functions and business. This information should be included in the additional spaces provided on the WSAP form. Please attach any additional information as appropriate.

If your organisation or business is a large water consumer, it may be necessary to undertake a more extensive water audit. The largest water users may be contacted directly by Council to review their water saving activities and any existing water savings action plans or water audits.

If your organisation or business has undertaken a water audit or implemented a Water Savings Action Plan within the past three years, this can be submitted to Council in place of a completed Business Water Savings Action Plan.

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Organisation Name

Operating Name (if different)

ABN

Postal Address

Contact Details

Name:

Position:

Email:

Phone:

Industry Category

☐ Vehicle wash

☐ Construction

☐ Commercial nursery

☐ Food/pet food production

☐ Cannery

☐ Pet care

☐ Child care

☐ Educational services

☐ Health care services

☐ Aged care services

☐ Motels, hotels and registered clubs

☐ Caravan park and cabins

☐ Business with cooling tower

☐ Public water feature

☐ Public sporting field

☐ Parks and gardens (including street trees)

☐ Other (please identify)

Description of Organisation

**WATER USE**

Complete the following table with an estimate of the comparative amount of water used for each function or purpose. This will give you an indication of where water efficiency improvements may be most effective. Whilst the biggest water-users in the home are washing machines, showers, taps and toilets, your business may have high water requirements in other areas. Water using activities specific to your business or organisation should be detailed under the Industry Specific Activities section below.

Water Using Area or Function	Estimated Amount of Water Used			
Amenities - Kitchen, food preparation, dishwashers	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Amenities -Toilets and hand basins	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Amenities - Showers	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Cleaning - General	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Cleaning - Laundry	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Maintenance - Leaks	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Maintenance - Equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Water Features (eg spas, pools, fountains)	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Outdoor - Gardens and lawns	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Outdoor - Water features (eg pools, spas, fountains)	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other -	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other -	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
Other -	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
<b>Industry specific activities (List any activities below that are specific to your business - eg concrete mixing for builders, plant watering for commercial nurseries etc)</b>				
	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A
	<input type="checkbox"/> High	<input type="checkbox"/> Medium	<input type="checkbox"/> Low	<input type="checkbox"/> N/A

**WATER EFFICIENCY CHECKLIST**

Complete this checklist to help identify actions that your organisation could undertake to improve water efficiencies. Indicate whether the action is currently undertaken (Yes/No). For water conservation activities not currently undertaken, include a proposed timeframe for action; this will be included in your plan (Section 4).

Managing Your Water	Yes/No	Recommendation	Action Timeframe (if No)
Is there at least one person in your organisation designated to monitor and improve water use?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Identify staff responsible for regular monitoring and championing water efficiencies	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
When you receive a water rates notice, do you monitor and record your water use?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Check your water rates notice and record water consumption for each quarterly period. Compare water usage with previous periods. An unusually high consumption rate may indicate a leak	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you have policies and/or procedures supporting water efficient actions?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Document and communicate organisational water conservation actions (e.g. only running dishwashers when full)	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you have signage (posters, stickers, signs) to encourage water conservation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Use signage to educate and/or remind staff, customers, and contractors of water saving practices.	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you engage staff in water-saving efforts?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Engage staff in water-saving activities through activities such as team meetings, newsletters, staff training.	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term

Amenities	Yes/No	Recommendation	Action Timeframe (if No)
Have you installed water efficient taps?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Install water efficient tapware or use flow regulators to reduce water flow. Check the WELS* star rating of your tap equipment	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Have you installed automatic shut-offs for your taps?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Where appropriate, install taps with sensor-equipped automatic shut offs	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Have you installed dual flush toilet(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Replace single flush toilets with water efficient dual flush toilets (6/3L or 4/5/3L). Check the WELS* star rating	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Have you replaced automatic (cyclic) flushing urinals with sensor flushing systems?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Replace automatic flushing urinal with sensor flushing systems to ensure water is only used when necessary. Regularly check that sensors are working correctly	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Have you installed water efficient showerhead(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Install water efficient showerheads. Check the WELS* star rating and replace if not water efficient	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term

Have you installed water efficient dishwasher(s)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	Ensure your dishwasher is water efficient. Check the WELS* star rating and replace if not water efficient. Wait for a full load and scrape dishes (rather than rinse) before loading	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term

Cleaning and Maintenance	Yes/No	Recommendation	Action Timeframe (if No)
Do you regularly check for leaks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Turn off all water using activities and check to see if the meter numbers or triangle is turning. If it is, you may have a leak. Check toilets, taps, and watering systems for hidden leaks	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you have an inspection and maintenance schedule for all water-using amenities and fixtures (taps, toilets, urinals, showers)?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Regularly inspect water-using fixtures and appliances. Replace rubber seals and perishable components on a scheduled basis.	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you communicate with cleaning staff about water conservation?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Communicate with cleaning staff about water efficient cleaning methods and policies	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you have a water efficient washing machine?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	High rated WELS* water efficient top-loading washing machines are recommended. Always use full loads	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you clean hard surfaces such as paths/driveways/walls without using water?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Use a broom or blower for all outdoor surfaces. Use water only for health and safety purposes.	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you clean tools using a bucket of water instead of under a running tap?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Clean tools and other equipment items using a bucket of water instead of running a tap where possible.	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term

Equipment / Infrastructure	Yes/No	Recommendation	Action Timeframe (if No)
Do you use a pool and/or spa cover?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Use pool / spa covers to reduce evaporation	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you have rainwater tank(s) connected to the toilet and garden?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Install and use connected rainwater tanks for use in the garden and for toilets	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term



Outdoor Use – Lawns & Gardens	Yes/No	Recommendation	Action Timeframe (if No)
Is your irrigation system maintained and checked regularly for leaks?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Implement a regular monitoring system (at least once a month) for your irrigation system. Damp patches on the ground or nearby road may indicate a leak and significant water loss.	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Have you adjusted automatic timers to ensure they are not watering for longer than needed?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Water according to Level 4 or 5 restriction requirements. If this is not possible due to the primary function of your organisation, include alternative water conservation strategies in the 'Industry Specific' section below.	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Have you ensured that any watering is captured on lawns and gardens rather than on hard surfaces?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Test and adjust watering systems to make sure water is captured on vegetation rather than on hard surfaces such as paths and roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Have you planted drought tolerant plants and low water lawns?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Choose and consider replacing plants with varieties that are suited to a dry climate	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you group plants by water requirements?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Place plants with a similar water requirement together to avoid overwatering	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you always check weather forecasts before your water lawns and gardens?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Check weather forecasts to make sure you are not overwatering	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do your garden beds have a layer of mulch?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Apply mulch to a depth of 7-10cm	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you improve your soils to encourage plant growth?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Better soil quality can improve plant growth and water retention	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Do you use alternative water sources to irrigate your garden?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Consider using alternative sources (rainwater, stormwater) where possible	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Have you considered how you will change your outdoor watering activities in the event greater water restrictions are introduced and outdoor watering is not permitted or extremely restricted?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A	Carefully consider and start to develop strategies to address potential increase in outdoor water use restrictions	<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
Other:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term

Industry Specific / Other	Yes/No	Recommendation	Action Timeframe (if No)
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term
	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> N/A		<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate/ongoing <input type="checkbox"/> Short term <input type="checkbox"/> Long term

\*The Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) scheme is an Australian Government initiative in partnership with state and territory governments. The more stars on a WELS label, the more efficient the water use rating. Go to [www.waterrating.gov.au](http://www.waterrating.gov.au) for current information on water efficient products and standards.

## WATER EFFICIENCY ACTION PLAN

Prepare a simple action plan by recording the actions marked 'No' in the Water Efficiency Checklist (Section 3) within the appropriate action timeframes.

Action Timeframe	Status
<b>Immediate Actions</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
<b>Short Term Actions</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress

	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
<b>Long Term Actions</b>	
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress
	<input type="checkbox"/> Under consideration <input type="checkbox"/> Resources allocated <input type="checkbox"/> In progress

**PLAN COMMITMENT**

To be completed by an organisation representative with the appropriate delegation. This may or may not be the contact identified in Section 1.

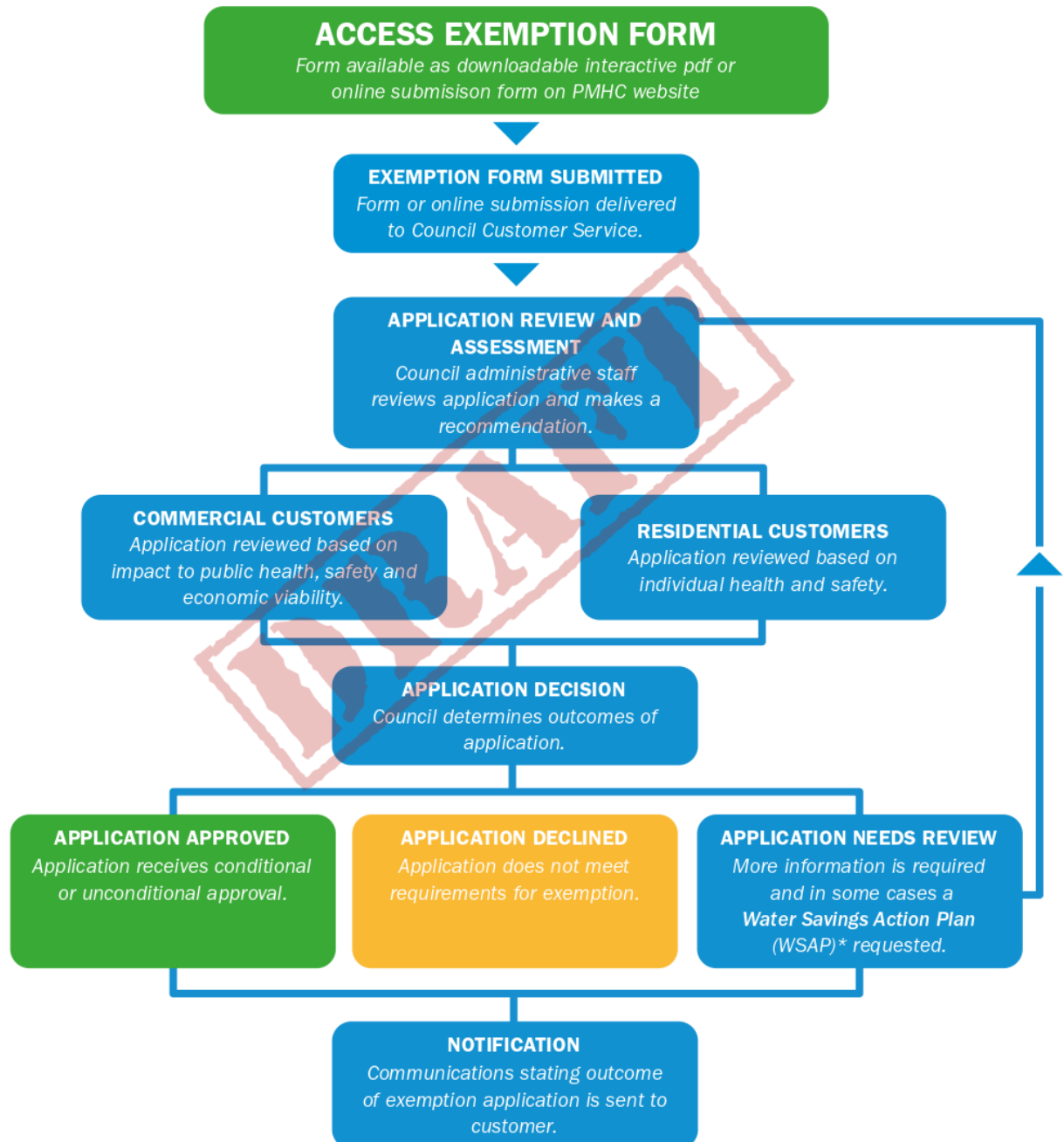
This organisation agrees to submit this Water Savings Action Plan (WSAP) to Port Macquarie-Hastings Council and commits to undertaking actions for improved water efficiency as identified in this plan.

Name	
Position	
Signature	
Date	
<b>STAFF USE - APPROVAL</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Approved <input type="checkbox"/> Not approved	Signature

# Water Restrictions Exemption Process

**P**ort Macquarie-Hastings Council are working hard to balance the needs of its customers with the need to protect the water supply during one of the worst droughts on record.

Residential and Commercial customers who are unable to comply with the current water restrictions are required to apply for an exemption. Exemption requests will be assessed on an individual basis.



\* The **Water Savings Action Plan (WSAP)** is a tool to assist business users in assessing their current water use levels and implementing changes that can be made to improve their water efficiencies.