

9 January 2019

Media release

Water rationing on the Waimea Plains starts 14 January

Tasman District Council's Dry Weather Taskforce Convenor, Dennis Bush-King, said that Stage One water restrictions for users on the Waimea Plains will come into force from Monday, 14 January.

"At this week's first meeting, the Dry Weather Task Force noted that dry conditions and increased water demand will see river levels in the Wairoa and Waimea Rivers drop.

"It is expected the Wairoa River at the gorge will reach trigger levels next week so we are moving to Stage One rationing for urban users and most water users on the Waimea Plains."

The Stage One rationing, meaning a cut in use by 20 percent of consented water take levels, applies in the Upper Catchment, Reservoir, Waimea West, Delta, Golden Hills, and the Upper Confined Aquifer zones on the Waimea Plains.

The Wai-iti zone is also affected by dry conditions but water will be released from the Kainui Dam as from Friday.

Mr Bush-King said users in the Lower Confined Aquifer, Hope Gravel, and Motupiko zones will have another week before rationing is likely to come in.

"Imposing Stage One restrictions in the Waimea's now, is in line with our approach to managing river levels. We could do with a good dose of 50mm of rain in the right place but this does not look likely. In light of this we have decided it is prudent to go to Stage One now and preserve our water for as long as possible before we have to go to more restrictive rationing."

Watering restrictions are also introduced for urban water users in Richmond, Mapua - Ruby Bay, Brightwater, Wakefield, and Hope, and their rural extensions. Only hand held hosing of gardens every second day is permitted according to your house number - i.e. if you have an even house number you may water on the even number calendar dates.

Mr Bush-King said the Anatoki Salmon Farm in Golden Bay will likely move into restrictions today or tomorrow.

Mr Bush-King encourages people to conserve water as the region still has a lot of hot, dry weather to come.

END

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Note to editors:

- Water users need to be aware of their own consent conditions and not rely on notification if they have specific flow related triggers.
- Motueka River is holding up well at present with good flows of around 12,000 litres per second still at Woodstock.
- The upper Takaka water users need to keep an eye on river levels as the river is likely to drop fast if generation cuts back from the Cobb scheme.
- We have started the dry period with full aquifers, but as crops start to mature the water demand will increase. Soil moisture levels are falling and were down to 23% in Appleby so things are starting to dry out.