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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **St George Given Wake-Up Call on Water**

The Balonne Shire Council is warning St George residents they must cut their garden water consumption by half or Council's river allocation will run out in three months.

At the Council meeting on Thursday 19 December two new water restriction levels were introduced to manage the dwindling supply.

Mayor Richard Marsh said to reduce river water usage Council recently introduced Level 4 water restrictions which allow residents to hand water at any time.

He said that should have reduced consumption to the targeted 50 megalitres (ML) a month, however 90 ML is still being used which indicates some people are illegally watering their gardens.

"We understand how upsetting it is for people to lose parts of their gardens but it's very disappointing to hear people talking about how to beat the restrictions."

"This is the time for everyone to work together to preserve and conserve our river water as without a major inflow the situation is only going to get worse."

Cr Marsh said there is 375 megalitres left in the river and that allocation is sustaining big losses due to evaporation, seepage and current high usage rates.

Council's new Level 5 Water Restrictions will be triggered when the remaining river allocation drops between 350 and 250 ML.

The Level 5 target of 33 ML of usage a month will see outside watering reduced to three days a week between 6pm and 8pm.

Residences, businesses and schools with odd street numbers would be allowed to water on a Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday, while even street numbers would water on the alternate days of Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

Level 6 Water Restrictions will be enforced when the river allocation drops to less than 250 ML and would see a total ban on external water use with watering of pets by bucket only.

The Balonne Shire Council is encouraging St George residents to start understanding their usage by undertaking their own water meter readings.

"Simply take a reading at two points in time and the difference between the readings is your water usage for that period."

Cr Marsh said the majority of Council's river water meters are digital smart meters, usage is in KL (m<sup>3</sup>) while bore water meters are generally analogue.



“People need to understand that whilst the measures we are taking may seem like the end of the world, other communities are on harsher restrictions and have been for some time.”

“We are all in the middle of the biggest natural disaster we’ve ever seen and St George is actually in the enviable position of having a good supply of bore water for household use.”

For more information:

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