



Media Release

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## Help conserve water this summer

As summer approaches, properties connected to Council water supplies are being encouraged to adjust when they water their lawns.

“Rainfall has also been low in 2016, so ground water levels have not had the opportunity to recharge well over winter – an issue which affects the wider Canterbury Region and means there are likely to be constraints in place on how much water can be used over summer. While rainfall in October has been moderate this has not had a noticeable effect on groundwater levels,” says Murray England, Selwyn District Council’s Asset Manager Water Services.

“During summer water supplies are also placed under pressure as many people decide to water their lawns and gardens at the same time in the evenings. Demand is particularly high at the weekends in the evenings.”

So that local households continue to experience consistent water pressure over summer and to help conserve water, the Council is asking residents on Council water supplies to try to avoid watering lawns between 6am-9am and 4pm-9pm daily. These are times when households use the most water.

While at this stage, the Council has not introduced formal water restrictions, the recommended times to avoid watering are the same as for the first level of water restrictions (Level 1).

The Council is recommending that, where possible, people water lawns between 10pm and 6am when demand for water is lowest and water has the opportunity to soak into the ground.

“People may also decide to let their lawns go brown over summer or to water less if their lawn is established. In many areas like Rolleston and West Melton where water meters operate choosing to use less water will result in people paying less in water charges,” says Mr England.

If you are considering watering your lawn between 9am and 4pm the Council recommends you check the weather conditions first and avoid watering in hot or windy conditions when water will evaporate, and instead choose a cooler or overcast day.

Since 2015, Rolleston, Prebbleton, Lincoln and West Melton have all had new bores added to supply these areas. Two new wells have been added in Rolleston – one of which was recently commissioned and the other is expected to be operational in December. A new deep well has been drilled at Edendale to replace the existing well, as dropping groundwater levels indicated the bore would soon go dry. In Leeston and Doyleston, upgraded pipework, more tank storage, a well upgrade and new high capacity pump are providing more water capacity.

If demand for water increases over summer then mandatory water restrictions may be introduced requiring households to avoid watering lawns at specific times. Summer water restrictions are commonly used in New Zealand as a way to manage demand for water.

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