



Media release

Monday 18 April 2016

Water restrictions lifted

Lawn watering restrictions for properties connected to Council water supplies across Selwyn will be lifted from across the district from 20 April 2016.

“The restrictions have been lifted as cooler weather and shorter daylight hours have helped reduce the demand for water,” says Asset Manager Water Services Murray England.

While residents will soon be able to water their lawns and gardens at any time of the day, the Council still encourages people to consider watering after 9pm and before 6am as this is the time of lowest demand for water and provides the best opportunity for water to soak into the ground, reducing the amount of water needed for irrigation.

Groundwater levels across the district remain very low and in many locations levels are continuing to decline. If groundwater recharge does not occur this autumn and winter then water restrictions are likely to be re-imposed in the spring.

“For example in West Melton, an area of high water demand, our monitoring data shows that groundwater levels have been declining continually since winter 2014, and are currently 30 metres lower than two years ago,” says Mr England.

“We are also monitoring a number of other wells at key locations where we are seeing prolonged decline in groundwater levels. Depending on conditions some wells may require re-drilling to ensure continuity of water supply.”

Mr England says the declining groundwater levels are being observed throughout Canterbury and further afield – and are contributing to other effects such as reduced flows in lowland streams.

Soil moisture deficit has also been much higher during the past summer, in comparison to last year and to historical averages for the region.

“These environmental conditions are an added pressure on the Council’s water supply infrastructure. We are continuing to plan for and provide additional capacity to accommodate the district’s growth, but it’s also important that the community helps through smart water use and conservation.”

In the coming year new reservoirs are planned at Rolleston, West Melton and Lincoln to provide additional storage capacity, while a new well will be developed in Prebbleton.

Council would like to thank residents for their assistance in reducing water demand over this summer period. See www.selwyn.govt.nz for updates.

Ends

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