

Issues Brief – September 2, 2015

Metro Vancouver Water Supply

Background

In a 24-hour period following five days of rain, the water level in Metro Vancouver's three reservoirs increased from 53 percent of their maximum storage capacity on Monday, August 31 to 60 percent on Tuesday, approaching the seasonal average.

Although Stage Three restrictions currently remain in place, the water restrictions will be relaxed when an adequate supply has been established. An update and potentially revised guidance is expected following the Labour Day weekend.

Key Messages:

- Metro Vancouver continues to closely monitor the beneficial improvements of precipitation on the reservoir levels and the daily water usage demands, with the goal of returning reservoir levels to well within the seasonal average.
- Substantial improvements are being seen in reservoir levels – up from 53% on Monday morning to 60% on Tuesday morning.
- The improvement to reservoir levels from the recent rain exceeded expectations and is very encouraging.
- With more rain received and forecast – Metro Vancouver is monitoring and modelling the revised supply conditions carefully with the expectation that they will provide an update and revised guidance following the long weekend.
- Importantly, the reservoirs are now back within the normal range which gives confidence that the water restrictions may be relaxed sooner rather than later, subject to the results of detailed modelling.

Secondary Messages

- Stage 3 water use restrictions remain in place until further notice, however an update is expected early next week.
- Stage 3 restrictions were implemented on July 20 and have been extremely effective in reducing water consumption below the target of 1.2 billion litres a day.
- Metro Vancouver posts the [daily water consumption volumes and the weekly reservoir levels](#) on their website so that people can see just how much water we are using.
- Following a summer-long drought, we have received more rain in one week than we did from May to late August.

Stage Three Water Restriction Prohibitions and Permitted Uses, include:

1) Prohibitions

- Lawn sprinkling is prohibited;
- Municipal exemption permits for new-lawns or nematode application are prohibited;
- Watering of trees, shrubs, flowers, decorative planters and vegetable gardens by sprinklers or soaker hoses is prohibited;
- Private pressure washing is prohibited;
- Washing of driveways, sidewalks and parkades for aesthetic purposes is prohibited;
- Washing of all cars, trucks, motorcycles, boats and other recreational and vehicles is prohibited;
- Golf course fairway watering is prohibited;
- Cemetery lawns – all forms of watering are prohibited;
- Municipal parks - all forms of watering are prohibited;
- Operation of ornamental fountains is prohibited;
- Filling or refilling of private swimming pools, hot tubs and garden ponds is prohibited.

2) Permitted Uses

- Hand watering of trees, shrubs, flowers, decorative planters and vegetable gardens using a spring-loaded shutoff nozzle, containers or a drip irrigation system is permitted;
- Watering of turf at turf farms or flowers and vegetables at commercial gardens is permitted.
- Hosing of outdoor surfaces (e.g. driveways, sidewalks, roofs) if required to avoid public health and safety concerns or to prepare a surface for painting/sealing or similar treatment is permitted;
- Commercial pressure washing for health and safety purposes or to prepare as surface for painting or similar purposes is permitted;
- Commercial car wash operations are permitted;
- Golf course watering of greens and tee areas at minimum levels required to maintain areas in useable condition is permitted;
- Sports playing field (including sand-based) and school yard watering at minimum levels as required to maintain areas in useable condition is permitted;
- Artificial turf requiring wetting and outdoor tracks if required for dust control or safety reasons is permitted.

Spokesperson: Metro Vancouver Chair Moore; Director Mussatto; Tim Jervis, General Manager, Water Services

Media Contact: Don Bradley, Div. Manager, c. 604.788.2821, don.bradley@metrovancover.com