



Save Money - Save Water

Basic Facts

Water covers three quarters of the world's surface. It is classified as either hard or soft:

💧 Hard water contains many minerals especially calcium

💧 Soft water is lacking in minerals contained in hard water

It is important to know the source of the water i.e. borehole, reservoir, artisan well, for without an average rainfall the supply is likely to be restricted by hose pipe bans and even drought orders.

The Cost of Water

Water is expensive and most sites are metered with BSI 6700: 1987 standard meter. It is important to know where the meter on your site is situated and whether it is a shared meter. In many cases rents are affected by water rates, whether they are inclusive or the cost is paid by society and charged separately to ploholders. It is worthwhile appointing a member of the society to keep a constant record of the meter readings so the bill, when received can be verified. It is also a worthwhile exercise to periodically test the water system. Turn off all the taps on site and check the meter, if it is still moving it means you are paying for a leak in the system. Contact either your council or the water company and have it checked and repaired.

Hosepipe Ban

This is issued by the Local Water Authority when the water table drops below a certain level. Water Authorities have been granted new powers under Water Use (Temporary Bans) Order 2010, which primarily affect domestic customers only and allows for restrictions on the use of hosepipes to be introduced. A hosepipe can use over 1000 litres of water in just one hour, which is more water than the average household uses in an entire day.

💧 There are some exemptions to the hosepipe ban, including in some regions Blue Badge holders. We strongly recommend that you check with your water supplier to see if you are exempt for any reason.

Drought Order

Each water authority has to produce a drought plan as part of the Statutory requirement for water companies under the Water Industry Act 1991 as introduced by the Water Act 2003. Every drought plan will contain the following information:

- What measures are used to decide when a drought has officially started.
- What will be done to manage the demand for water.
- What temporary measures may need to be taken to provide additional supplies .
- How the water authority will communicate with customers.

How the environmental impacts of the actions will be managed by the authority. The Water Resources Act 1991 as amended by the Environment Act 1995 and the Water Act 2003 allows for three legislative ways for dealing with drought situations: drought permits, ordinary drought orders and emergency drought orders. Drought permits and drought orders are drought management actions that, if granted, can allow more flexibility to manage water resources and the effects of drought on public water supply and the environment. Drought orders are issued by the Secretary of State for the Environment for immediate enforcement by the local water authorities. Drought orders carry fines for non compliance on summary conviction, to a fine not exceeding the statutory maximum. If any drought order is placed by your local authority, it is advisable to check with the authority the position over the water supply.

How to Water and Save Money

- ⇒ Water carefully, either in the cool of the morning or at night, making sure the water gets to the roots of the plant
- ⇒ Let grass grow longer as it will stay greener, and don't worry about watering your lawn, it will recover later in the year. If you do wish to cut your lawn, set your lawn mower cutter to a minimum height of 2 inches / 5cm
- ⇒ Avoid sprinklers as in one hour they consume more water than an average family uses in one whole day
- ⇒ Use manure and compost to help retain soil moisture
- ⇒ Mulch using a layer of tree bark, gravel and compost (minimum depth 3 inches / 7.5cm) onto the top of your damp soil. This will provide protection from the sun and reduce moisture loss.
- ⇒ Use a watering can to monitor the amount of water given to each plant. Place your finger over the spout of the can, to help direct the water to the roots
- ⇒ Water in new plants thoroughly—but not too much afterwards. This will encourage a deep root system and get the most benefit from soil moisture
- ⇒ Hoe regularly to remove weeds, as they will take precious water from the soil. This will also help to create a dust mulch.
- ⇒ Do not over water herbs—many come from hot climates so can endure long hot spells
- ⇒ Spray and water regularly with a seaweed based fertiliser, it will help plants that are under stress
- ⇒ Use rainwater butts to supplement tap water
- ⇒ Fit non-return valves—these are a statutory requirement by government Water Act 1945, Section 17, Bye-law 25 to all water authorities and is enforced on Agricultural land, which includes all allotments. They should be fitted to each Stand Pipe, but most authorities have stated that one is fitted to the main inlet pipe to the site is sufficient. The purpose is to stop any chemical inadvertently getting into the local water supply. However, to avoid the site water system from being contaminated it would be necessary to fit valves to each tap.

Watering Crops— Dry Season

Carrot, Parsnip and Swede	Never water, it will lower yield and affect taste. Carrots and Parsnips will split if watered irregularly
Jerusalem Artichoke	Never water, it encourages the formation of leaves and not tubers
Onion	In a very dry season, water the ground before planting to get your sets off to a good start
Turnip	In a dry year, flood the bed about a month before harvest. Or replace with Kohl rabi which is more drought tolerant
Cauliflower (winter), cabbage, calabrese	If the soil is very dry, puddle in to help them get established
Potato (main crop)	Water only when the flowers have just opened - at any other time it will lower the yield
Spinach	Regular watering will extend harvest
Potato (early)	Regular watering will extend harvest
Tomato (outdoor)	Regular watering will increase yield but may reduce flavour
Cucumber	Water through growing season to improve both yield and taste
Courgette, Marrow	Water when fruits start to swell, then water copiously
Leek	The more you water the bigger the crop.
Lettuce	Water from sowing to harvest, encouraging rapid tender growth
Spring Onion	Once you start to water you can not stop!
Cauliflower (summer)	Continuous watering to stop plants running to seed
Peas	Water throughout the life of this crop
Runner Beans	Water continuously, but crops can be tricky in dry weather. Better to flood once a week again after flowering
Celery	Huge volumes of water required. During a drought it might be better to give up on this crop because of its high demand.
Chinese Cabbage	Any shortage of water will cause it to fail and run to seed
Sweetcorn	Watering when plants are young and the earth is dry can increase yields



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