



seqwater
WATER FOR LIFE




Summer Water Outlook 2018-19

for South East Queensland


The Realities of Rain

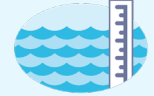
The Summer Water Outlook provides an overall picture of South East Queensland’s water position, combining the weather forecast and water consumption information to present a summary of water supply availability and assess potential impact on the water supply.

AT A GLANCE

 Above average temperatures and heatwaves over summer are likely

 Decreased chance of cyclones and widespread flooding

 Dry earth will require more rain to fill the soil profile before water starts to run off into our lakes and rivers

 Drinking water dam levels will remain above the drought readiness trigger (70%) well into 2019

RECENT WEATHER

Across winter, rainfall was below to well below average across much of South East Queensland. Daytime temperatures were very warm overall, and the warmest on record at some locations. Spring temperatures were above average. All of this contributed to dry soils in our catchments.

Thunderstorms and showers throughout October in South East Queensland resulted in above average rainfall totals in all locations. Although most climate drivers were neutral, overall it was a dry and warm winter and spring for much of South East Queensland.

DECEMBER RAIN

South East Queensland received some welcome rainfall in mid-December - more than 100mm in some locations. However due to the dry soils, much of this rain was soaked up. The level of the SEQ Water Grid’s drinking water dams rose by about 1%, roughly a month or two of drinking water.

However, the rain means that our catchments are wetter than they were, so we are likely to see run-off into rivers and lakes sooner with any follow up rain.

WEATHER FORECAST

The general forecast is for above or well above average temperatures and average or below average rainfall, fewer tropical cyclones, more heatwaves, an increased bushfire risk and a reduced chance of widespread floods.

Combined with the warm spring we experienced (the equal fifth warmest spring on record), this forecast will keep soils dry even if rainfall returns to average. This means rain is likely to first soak into the soil before filling rivers and lakes.

The Bureau of Meteorology’s outlook remains at El Niño ALERT. El Niño ALERT is not a guarantee that El Niño will occur, if it did it would be considered a very late starting event and it would not significantly change the expected weather for summer.

Although there is a chance of fewer tropical cyclones, we’ve already seen one tropical cyclone cross the coast. At least one cyclone has made landfall on the Australian coast each season since reliable records began in the 1970s. And what the forecast can’t tell us is the size, structure or path of cyclones.

Weather can change quickly so it is important to stay aware of the forecast and what is happening around you, and prepare accordingly.



DAM LEVELS

1 June 2018 81.8%
1 December 2018 76.4%

Inflows into our lakes depend on the amount and distribution of rainfall and the catchment conditions. Drier catchments result in less run off into the water storages.

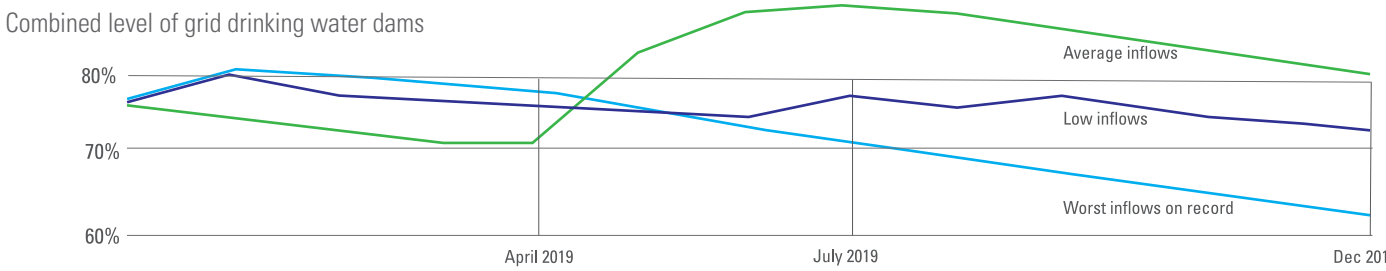
If we receive inflows lower than the worst on record, the combined level of our drinking water dams may drop to 70% during winter 2019 while average inflows may result in a combined drinking water dam level of about 75%.

The drawdown of the storages depends on a range of factors including inflows, rainfall, evaporation and demand.

The warmer than normal conditions may lead to demands and evaporation that are higher than predicted, which would result in lower storage levels than those estimated.

FOCUS: Our drinking water dams are spread out all over South East Queensland. The largest by far is Lake Wivenhoe, which accounts for about 50% of the drinking water supply. Our drinking water dams in the north and south of the region are generally sitting at 90% or above, however Wivenhoe is at 68% - an indication of the dry conditions experienced in our central region over winter and spring.

Comparison of potential combined level of our drinking water dams if inflows into the storages over the next 12 months are worst on record, low or average.



WATER CONSUMPTION

171 litres per person, per day*

On average, South East Queenslanders used about 171 litres of water per person, per day in the past year. South East Queenslanders have maintained water wise behaviours since the Millennium Drought, with consumption figures for the last three years hovering at just over half of what we used pre-drought.



Consumption generally increases during the warmer months. As heatwaves and above average temperatures are predicted, we expect to see consumption rise over summer.

Litres per person, per day	South East Queensland	Central SEQ (Brisbane, Ipswich, Logan)	Gold Coast	Redlands	Scenic Rim	Sunshine Coast
Average	171	164	187	180	114	189
Min	151	145	163	150	86	163
Max	214	202	237	245	142	245

*Consumption figures from 2 November 2017 to 31 October 2018, residential use only.

REALITIES OF RAIN

In South East Queensland, we can count on all types of rain. There's wedding day rain, long weekend rain and school holiday rain!

In fact, the only rain we can't count on, is rain when we need it, where we need it. That's why we're planning our water future - because we can't always count on the rain.

Realities of Rain is starting the conversation with South East Queensland communities about what we do when we can't always count on the rain.

WHY ARE WE TALKING ABOUT RAIN?

Up until now, we've relied on dams for our water supply – but these count on rain falling when and where we need it.

Dams store water - they don't make it. With the climate changing and our population growing, just having dams is not going to be enough for the future.



No one wants to see a South East Queensland without enough water to live, work and play the way we want to. That's why we're planning now - and we want the community to be part of the plan we're creating.

Check out yourseqwater.com.au/realities-of-rain

HOW TO PREPARE FOR SUMMER

- Sign up to our dam release notification service at seqwater.com.au to receive notifications by email, SMS or recorded message to landline when dams are spilling or releases from gated dams are occurring.
- Download our public safety app, from the App Store or Google Play. Our app combines dam release notifications, dam levels information, recreation, safety and lake closure updates and weather alerts.
- Be waterwise – we use most of our water outside the home. Water your plants in the early morning or late afternoon. Applying a good mulch to your garden and using your pool cover will help save water.



Weather can still be unpredictable.
Play it safe this summer!

seqwater.com.au/playitsafe