



REALITIES OF RAIN

WHAT IS DROUGHT?

There are different kinds of drought. They can have one, or all, of these characteristics, such as when:

- there is less rain than usual
- soils dry out quicker than rain can replenish
- dams get low or run dry.

You never know when a drought might start, or when it is going to end.

Australia is a dry continent, and droughts are nothing new to South East Queensland.

However, it is likely Australia will experience more frequent and intense heatwaves and droughts in the future¹.

South East Queensland's Drought Response Plan is a series of actions we take when the volume of available drinking water in our key supply dams reach certain levels.

SEQWATER DEFINES DROUGHT AS A PERIOD OF TIME WHEN THE COMBINED LEVEL OF OUR DRINKING WATER DAMS ARE AT OR BELOW DROUGHT RESPONSE LEVEL.



The plan includes things like:

- changing the operation of the water grid
- asking people to voluntarily reduce the amount of water they use
- increasing supply from the Gold Coast Desalination Plant
- turning on the advanced water treatment plants that can treat wastewater to produce recycled water.

The unpredictable nature of drought means adaptive responses are needed. As a drought unfolds, our response will be proportional to its severity and duration and take into account things like changing population, water use behaviours, infrastructure and technology.

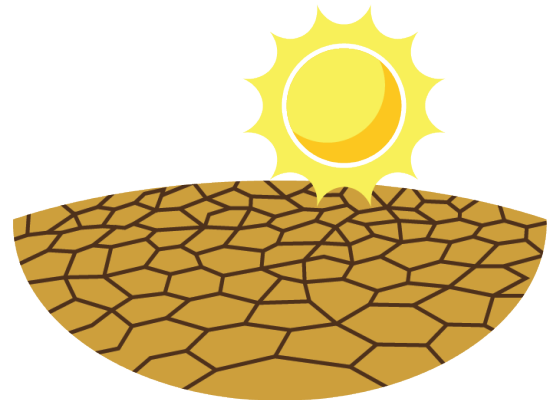
Our drought response plan has been developed to balance cost, water security and community outcomes, and implement the lessons learned from the Millennium Drought.

FLASHBACK: MILLENNIUM DROUGHT

From late 1996 to mid-2010, much of southern Australia (except parts of central Western Australia) experienced a prolonged period of dry conditions, known as the Millennium Drought.

Brisbane's main water source, Wivenhoe Dam, was just 15% full in August 2007. In response, South East Queenslanders installed water efficiency devices and appliances, reused greywater in their homes and gardens - more than halving their water use, to just 120 litres per person per day.

The SEQ Water Grid, Gold Coast Desalination Plant and the Western Corridor Recycled Scheme were built during the drought to help increase water security.



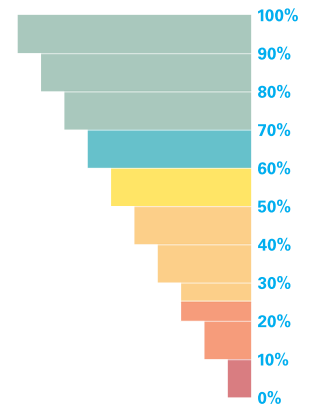
SOUTH EAST QUEENSLAND DROUGHT RESPONSE

WATER EFFICIENCY AWARENESS

DROUGHT READINESS

DROUGHT RESPONSE

DROUGHT CONTINGENCY



“THE KEY TO CREATING A BUFFER IN A CITY’S WATER SUPPLY IS HAVING MORE THAN ONE SOURCE. RESERVOIRS ALONE WILL NOT SUFFICE FOR CITIES WITH HIGHLY VARIABLE CLIMATES LIKE THOSE IN AUSTRALIA.”

PROFESSOR ANDREW WESTERN
UNIVERSITY OF MELBOURNE



¹ Bureau of Meteorology and CSIRO's 2016 State of the Climate Report