

Water and Sanitation in the News

Cape Town facing summer water restrictions

Water restrictions may be in the pipeline after the City of Cape Town recorded a lower than average rainfall, the municipality said on Wednesday. It said the six major dams which supply Cape Town and the surrounding region were at about 74% full.

While this was not "critically low", it was lower than the average over the last 20 years. The City said in a statement that it would meet with national government to discuss possible restrictions.

The City, as well as other stakeholders, would meet with the National Department of Water and Sanitation to decide if restrictions would be required during summer.

Restrictions are implemented to conserve water resources during periods of drought in order to ensure ongoing supply to users. "Because Cape Town is situated in a water-scarce, semi-arid region, it is important that we all do our bit to conserve our most precious resource and avoid unnecessary water restrictions and measures," said mayoral committee member for utility services Ernest Sonnenberg.

Source: [News24, 30 September 2015](#)

Context

Durban and Bloemfontein are also major cities that began implemented water restrictions in July because of the prolonged drought. Earlier in September, the Free State has been declared a disaster area because of the drought.

According to the latest forecast from the South African Weather Service, the scorching drought that has cut South Africa's key maize crop by a third is likely to continue into the southern hemisphere summer as an El Nino weather pattern strengthens.

The forecast, for the October to February summer period, said the "likelihood of extreme warmer temperatures over most of South Africa is high." "The forecasting system indicates high probabilities of below-normal rainfall for the start of the summer season. This is expected to continue throughout summer with relatively small chances of above-normal rainfall for localized areas in early- to mid-summer," it said.

The current El Nino weather phenomenon is expected to peak between October and January and could turn into one of the strongest on record, experts have said. This could bring drier conditions to southern Africa, which is already suffering from drought.

Source: [Reuters, 29 September 2015](#)

Preventative Maintenance Principles & Guidelines: Week 8

General Maintenance Guidelines

Numerous water and waste water treatment works and infrastructure (including reservoirs, pump stations, distribution network pipes, etc.) are much more than 20 years old. Consequently, most supplier's guarantees have expired, manuals are lost, and standard operating procedures are not in place, etc. It is, however, important to start somewhere (with maintenance procedures), as all old equipment currently in use are still very critical to the delivery of sufficient quality & quantity drinking and treated waste water. For instance, some general maintenance guidelines regarding **pumps** are:

Pumps



Pumps - Monthly

- Clean any dirt/oil/contaminant
- Examine for any mechanical damage or corrosion
- Check while running for excessive vibration, noise & temp.
- Ensure mounting bolts are properly tightened
- Inspect mechanical seals for leaks
- Check operation of non-return valves
- Remove corrosion & paint

Pumps - Annually (Depending on usage)

- Strip down
- Clean all parts thoroughly
- Inspect impeller for any signs of mechanical damage or corrosion
- Replace mechanical seal
- Reassemble and ensure free rotation of shaft
- Reinstall, ensuring proper alignment

Source: [Outcomes from Advanced Technical Process Controllers' Workshops 2011 & 2015](#)

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