

Greater Sydney customer drought update

22 January 2019



Key messages

- As of 21 January, Sydney's dam levels are at 60.3%, a decrease of 0.5% since last Sunday.
- The decrease was due to the combination of low rainfall in the catchments and high demand due to heatwave conditions.
- Whilst parts of the system are showing signs of recovery, drought conditions remain throughout the Sydney catchments, with ongoing predictions of a warmer than average summer.
- The current BoM outlook indicates February to April is likely to be drier than median. ENSO outlook remains at El-Nino alert.
- WaterNSW is working closely with Sydney Water and other customers to manage water quality risks associated with low storage levels and transfer of water from the Shoalhaven.

More details are outlined below.

Inflows to WaterNSW storages

Rainfall recorded in the catchment areas was very low this week, resulting in storage inflows remaining at low levels. However, this is an increase in comparison to much of the last 18 months where inflows were at or near zero.

Supply

Heatwave conditions and very low rainfall has resulted in a large increase in the volume supplied to Sydney Water this week, with average daily supply increasing 330ML/d (to 1,803ML/d from the previous weekly average of 1,473ML/d).

WaterNSW storages

WaterNSW storages in the Sydney catchment decreased by 0.5% (-12,884 ML) in the past week.

Shoalhaven pumping

During the last week, approximately 2GL was transferred from the Shoalhaven. Further pumping is scheduled for next week to transfer the remaining 0.5GL of available stored water in Tallowa Dam. More than 28GL has been transferred since reaching the trigger to commence transfers in April 2018.

WaterNSW is continuing to release transfers from the Shoalhaven to the Upper Nepean System. The release from Wingecarribee to Nepean is being ramped down from 350ML/d to 50ML/d. Transfers have resulted in a steady rise in Nepean Dam, providing much needed relief to the Upper Nepean system which supplies Nepean, Avon and Macarthur WFPs (a population of over 500,000) as well as supplementing supply to Prospect WFP via the Upper Canal when sufficient storage is available.

As releases to Nepean continue, WaterNSW is transferring water from Nepean to Avon via the Nepean Deep Water Pump Station. This is in line with standard operating protocols to maximise supply security to the Illawarra and minimise the risk of spill at Nepean.

WaterNSW is working closely with Sydney Water to manage anticipated changes to water quality as a result of transfers from the Shoalhaven. Sydney Water are reviewing plans for both short and long-term upgrades at Nepean WFP which could significantly reduce the risks associated with changing water quality and increasing demand.

Origin Energy continue to transfer water as per operations for their pumped hydro scheme. This is managed via a detailed water accounting system and results in temporary fluctuations in storage levels at Tallowa, Bendeela and Fitzroy Falls.

This week's weather forecast

The forecast is for mostly dry weather with a medium chance of showers on Wednesday. There is the chance of thunderstorms on most afternoons. Temperatures in the west are forecast to reach the high 30's. Supply to Sydney Water is expected to remain high.

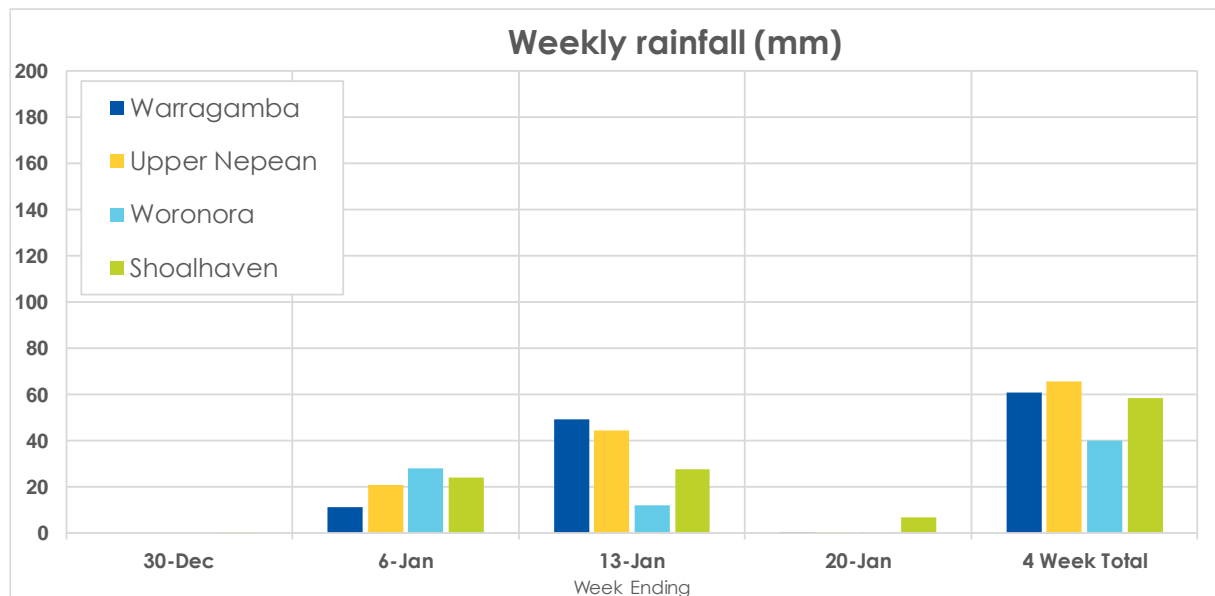
Details

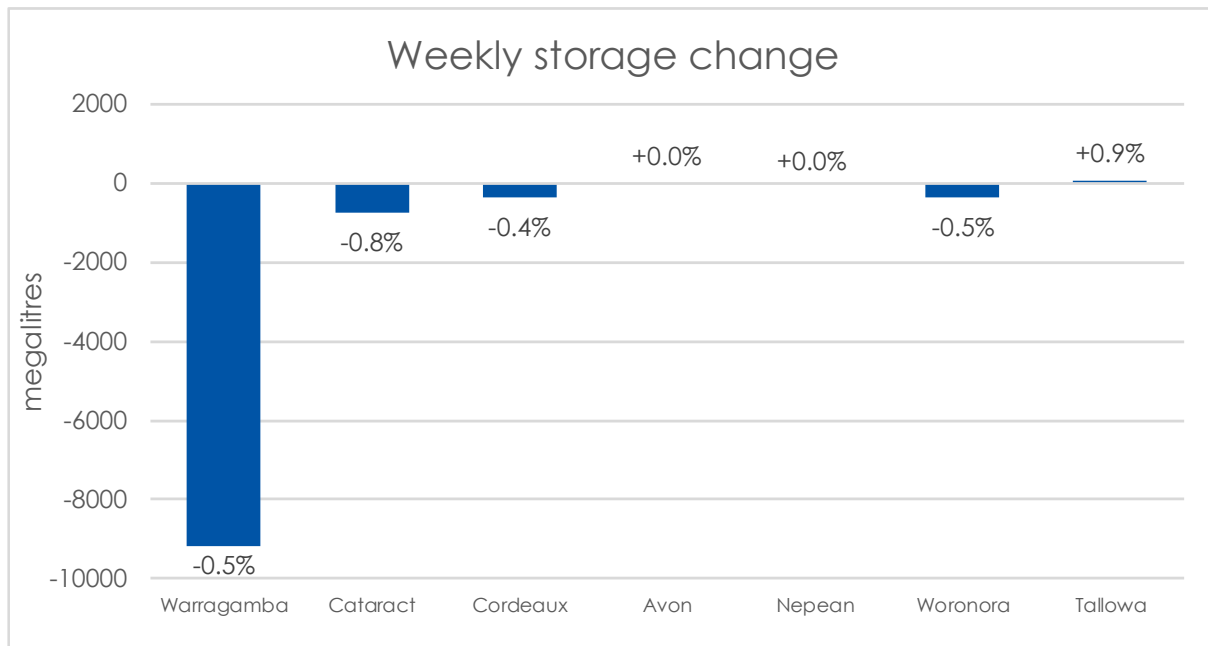
Storage situation

Sydney's dam levels are at 60.3%, a decrease of 0.5% since last Sunday.

Rainfall

Rainfall over the last 4 weeks:





Water supplied to Sydney Water

Total water supply (7 days)	Average daily supply (7 days)	Net weekly storage change
12,618ML	1,803ML	- 12,884ML

More information

Subscribe to have the report emailed to you each week and stay up-to-date with storage levels, system risks and climate conditions across NSW. Visit our website at waternsw.com.au/subscribe.