

Greater Sydney drought update

15 October 2019



Key messages

- As of 13 October, Sydney's dam levels are at 48.6%, a decrease of 0.2% since last week.
- The 50% drought trigger was reached on 18 August 2019.
- Level 1 Water Restrictions are currently in place for Greater Sydney.
- Drought conditions remain throughout the Sydney catchments. Only minor rainfall was received across the Greater Sydney catchments during the week. Storage inflows remain low.
- Changes to system operating rules commenced on 27 August 2019 to allow WaterNSW to access an additional 14.5GL in Tallowa Dam. The additional transfers will not significantly impact water supply or energy security in the Illawarra/Shoalhaven regions and will continue only as long as sufficient water is available in Tallowa Dam. The increased operating storage in Tallowa will allow WaterNSW to capture more water during inflow events.
- The Shoalhaven transfer system returned to service as planned on Friday 11 October with 980ML transferred up till Sunday morning. WaterNSW plans to transfer a further 16GL over the next few weeks.
- Water for Macarthur Water Filtration Plant (WFP) is being sourced from both Cordeaux and Cataract Dams whilst works are undertaken at Nepean Dam. Macarthur WFP can be supplied from any of the four Upper Nepean Dams (Cataract, Cordeaux, Avon and Nepean) which in turn can be supplemented with Shoalhaven Transfers. See WaterNSW website for more information on the Sydney supply system. WNSW routinely changes the source of supply for Macarthur in response to relative storage levels, water quality and asset availability.
- WaterNSW continues to work closely with Sydney Water and other stakeholders to manage water quality risks associated with low storage levels and transfer of water from the Shoalhaven.
- Extractions from Duckmaloi Weir ceased on 7 October due to a decline in flow. Use of the Duckmaloi water source is outlined in the Water Management Licence and is key to providing security of supply to the Blue Mountains, Oberon Council, Lithgow City Council and Energy Australia. Given Duckmaloi is essentially a run of river system the variable water quality will need to be carefully managed to ensure there are no risks to either water supply or energy generation.

More details are outlined below.

Inflows to WaterNSW storages

Minor rainfall was recorded over the Greater Sydney catchments this week. Storage inflows remain at low levels due to low antecedent moisture condition of the catchment.

Supply

There was a slight decrease to the volume supplied to Sydney Water this week. Average daily supply was 1,110 ML/d. The previous weekly average was 1,178 ML/d.

WaterNSW storages

WaterNSW storages in the Sydney catchment decreased by 0.2% (-6,437 ML) in the past week.

Shoalhaven pumping

More than 45 GL has been transferred since reaching the trigger to commence transfers in April 2018. The transfer system returned to service as planned on Friday 11 October with 980ML transferred up till Sunday morning. WaterNSW plans to transfer a further 16GL over the next few weeks. As per current drought response strategy, this water will be transferred to Nepean Dam for supply to the Macarthur, Picton and Bargo supply zones. Some of the water transferred to Nepean will then be pumped over to Avon Dam to supplement supply to the Illawarra.

Transfers to date have resulted in improved supply security for the Upper Nepean system which supplies Nepean, Avon and Macarthur Water Filtration Plants / WFPs (a population of over 600,000) as well as supplementing supply to Prospect WFP via the Upper Canal when sufficient storage is available.

This week's weather forecast

The forecast indicates negligible rainfall (less than 5 mm) over the Greater Sydney Catchment areas for most of this week. Temperatures in Greater Sydney are forecast to reach a minimum of 11 degrees and a maximum of 26 degrees across next week. This is expected to result in supply levels to Sydney Water that are above average for this time of year.

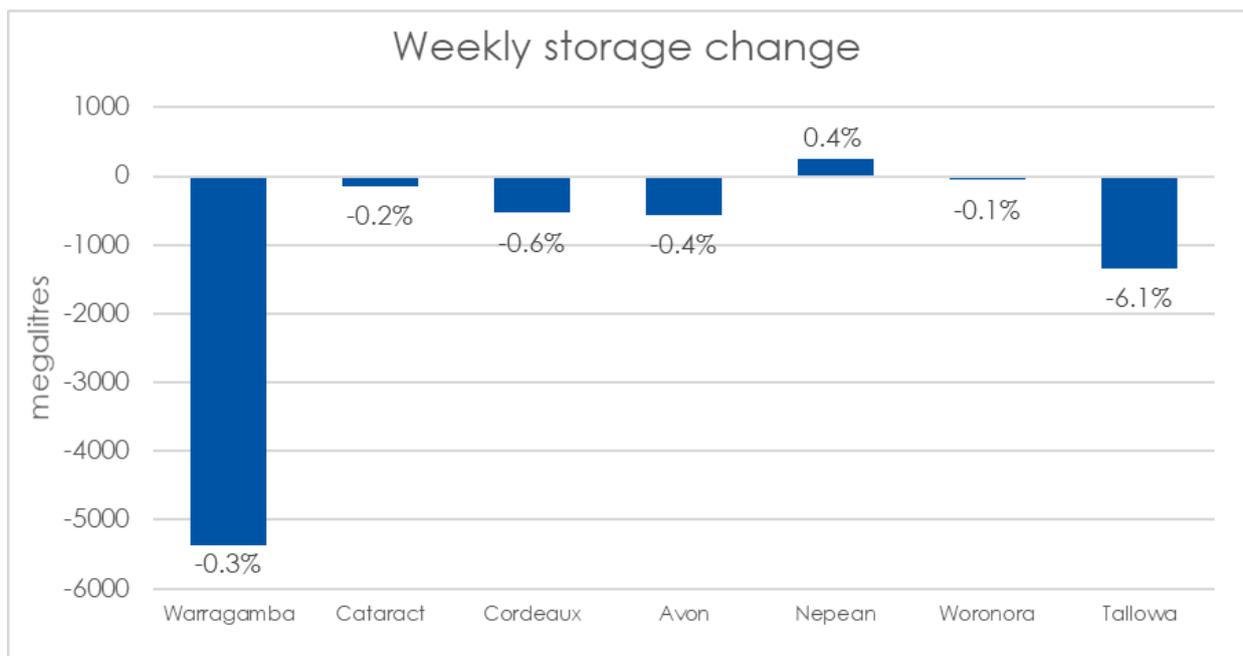
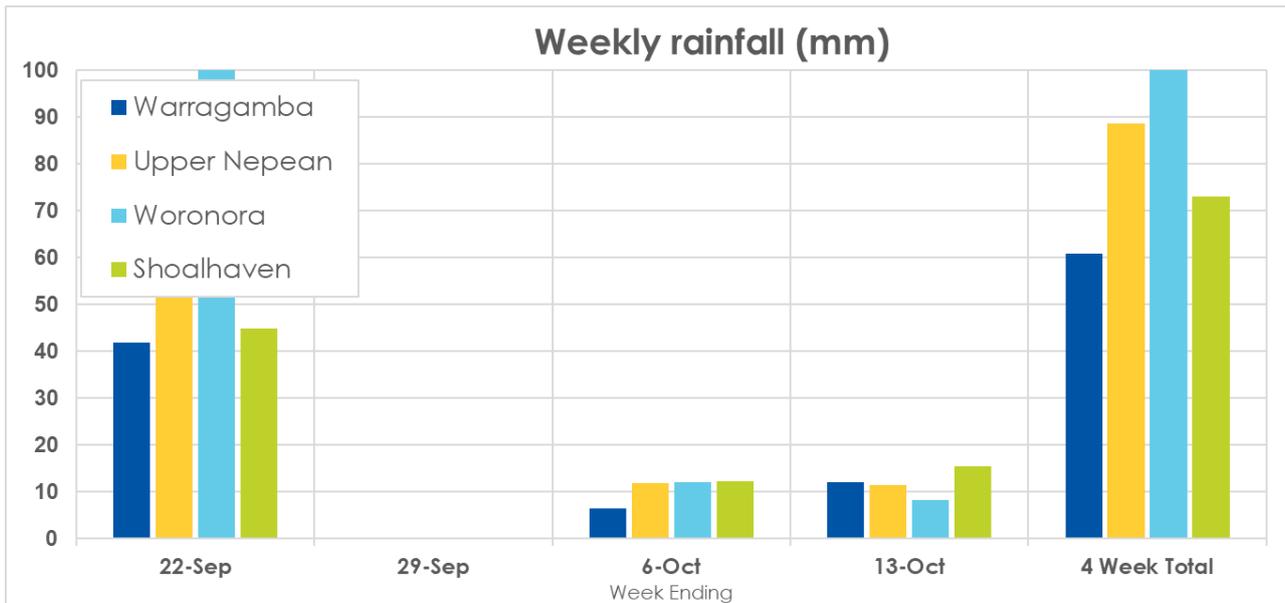
Details

Storage situation

Sydney's dam levels are at 48.6%, a decrease of 0.2% since last week.

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
7,770 ML	1,110 ML	-6,437 ML

More information

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