

Greater Sydney drought update

2 April 2019



Key customer messages

As of 31 March, Sydney's dam levels are at 57.1%, a decrease of 0.3% since last Sunday.

The dam levels have decreased at a lesser rate due to rain received by the catchments and cool conditions late in the week.

Drought conditions remain throughout the Sydney catchments. Inflows remain low because the catchments only experienced a day of rain.

The 50% drought trigger is likely to be reached in July assuming drought conditions continue.

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.

Oberon Council is the only LWU in the Greater Sydney area of operations with restrictions in place.

More details are outlined below.

Inflows to WaterNSW storages

Moderate rainfall was recorded over the catchment areas on the weekend. Storage inflows remain at low levels.

Supply

Wet weather has resulted in a decrease in the volume supplied to Sydney Water this week, with average daily supply decreasing 142 ML/d (to 1,571 ML/d from the previous weekly average of 1,713 ML/d).

Water Storages

WaterNSW storages in the Sydney catchment decreased by 0.3% (-7,492 ML) in the past week.

Shoalhaven pumping

More than 33 GL has been transferred since reaching the trigger to commence transfers in April 2018. Despite recent rainfall seeing Tallowa Dam reach full capacity, no transfers were made from Shoalhaven in the past two weeks due to the first of several system outages

scheduled to facilitate major maintenance works by both Origin Energy and WaterNSW. The outage is to address both statutory requirements and key process safety issues.

Transfers to date 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.

Transfers from Nepean to Avon via the newly recommissioned Nepean Deep Water Pumping Station were completed in February with the two storages now in balance as per system operating rules. The transfer has allowed WaterNSW to both maximise supply security to the Illawarra and minimise the risk of spill at Nepean. Future Shoalhaven Transfers may necessitate further Nepean / Avon Transfers.

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.

The Shoalhaven Scheme is offline from 18 March to 3 May for the first of several major system outages to facilitate essential maintenance works by both Origin Energy and WaterNSW. No transfers will be possible during this outage period. Further outages are planned during 2019.

Some of the outages scheduled will only result in a reduced transfer rate. Origin has rescheduled outages into smaller blocks to facilitate transfers if water is available. WaterNSW continues to work closely with Origin Energy to minimise the impact of planned works on system availability and assess the risks to drought response against the asset reliability risks associated with not going ahead with the works.

This week's weather forecast

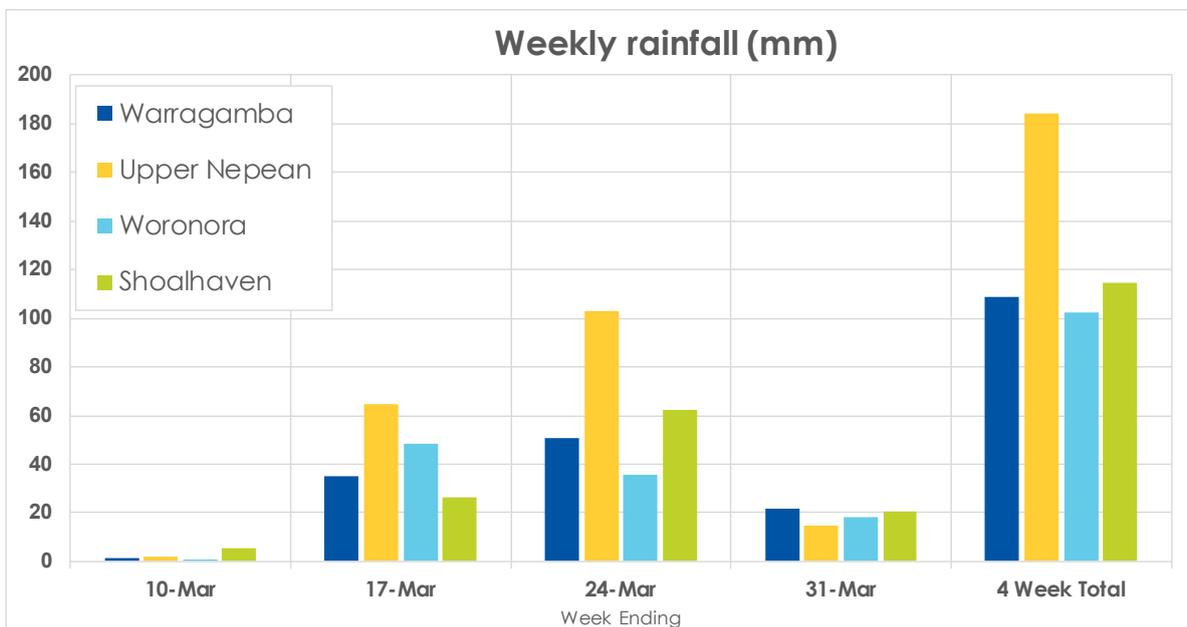
The forecast indicates isolated showers of less than 2mm over the catchment areas this week. Temperatures in the west are forecast to reach the high 20's. This is expected to result in an increasing trend in supply levels to Sydney Water next week.

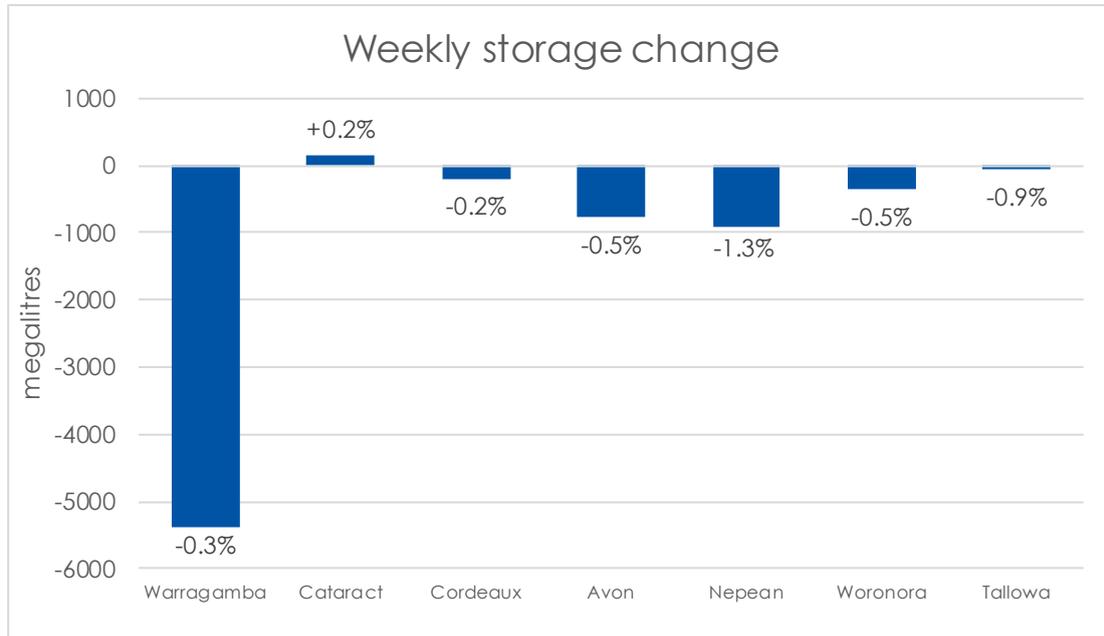
Details

Storage situation

Sydney's dam levels are at 57.1%, a decrease of 0.3% since last Sunday.

Rainfall





Water supplied to Sydney Water

Total water supply (7 days)	Average daily supply (7 days)	Net weekly storage change
10,048 ML	1,435 ML	-7,492 ML

More information

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