

Greater Sydney customer drought update

8 January 2019



Key messages

As of 6 January, Sydney's dam levels are at 60.9%, a decrease of 0.5% since last Sunday.

The catchments received occasional heavy rainfall in very localised areas due to recent storms. Widespread catchment rain was negligible, resulting in declining in storage levels. Also, with dry and windy weather since the last rainfall event, the soil profile is taking longer to recover.

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 there is a slightly better chance of drier than average conditions for January to March. ENSO outlook remains at El-Nino alert for summer.

Shoalhaven City Council have lifted water restrictions thanks to recent rainfall and inflow into Tallowa Dam.

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

Despite isolated storms over the catchment areas, storage inflows remain at low levels. However, this is an increase in comparison to inflows recorded over much of the last 18 months, where flows were at or near zero.

Supply

Low rainfall and high temperatures has meant an increase in the volume supplied to Sydney Water this week, with average daily supply, increasing 53ML/d (to 1,688ML/d from the previous weekly average of 1,635ML/d).

WaterNSW storages

WaterNSW storages in the Sydney catchment decreased by 0.5% (-10,867 ML) in the past week.

Shoalhaven pumping

During the last week, approximately 4 GL was transferred from the Shoalhaven. Further pumping is scheduled for next week to transfer the remaining 2 GL of available stored water in Tallowa Dam. More than 25 GL 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 maintained at 400ML/d. This is resulting 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.

This week's weather forecast

Medium to high chance of showers are predicted from Tuesday to Friday this week. Temperatures in the west are forecast to reach the mid 20's to mid 30's. Supply to Sydney Water is expected to decrease this week due to a decrease in temperatures and wet outlook.

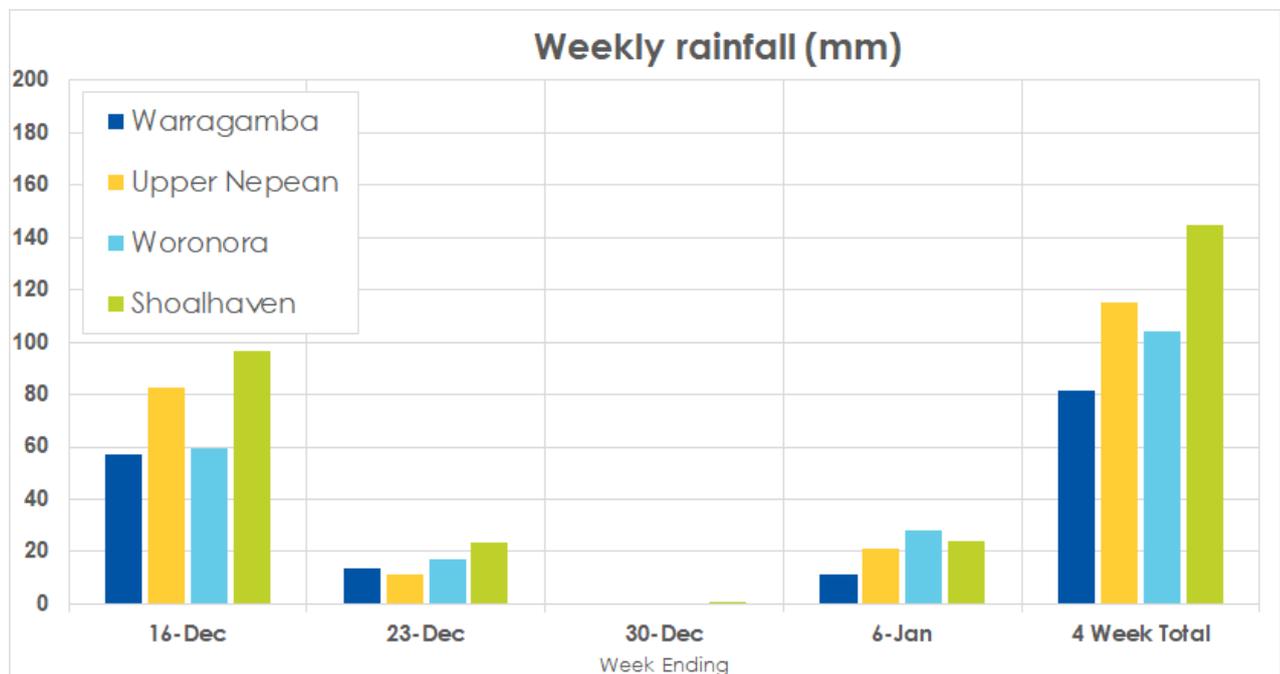
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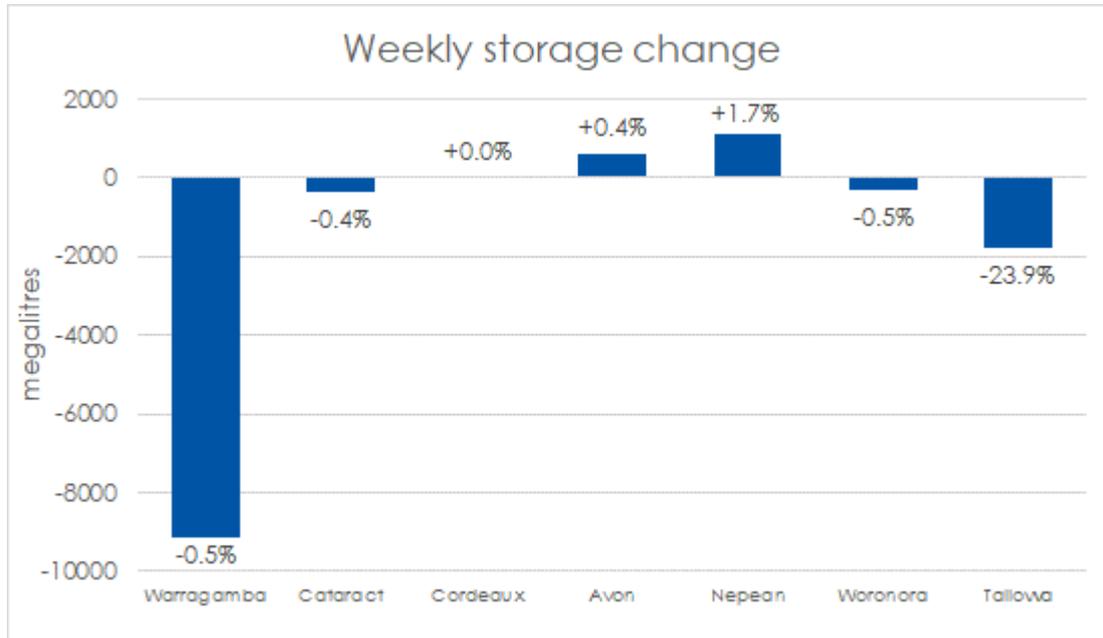
Storage situation

Sydney's dam levels are at 60.9%, 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
11,816 ML	1,688 ML	- 10,867 ML

More information

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