

19 December 2022

Dear Stakeholder,

I wanted to provide an overview of the water resources situation in the South West and the steps we are taking to support businesses reduce their water usage to protect our water resources now and into the future.

It's been exceptionally dry and hot this year, with the hottest temperatures ever recorded in Cornwall this summer with the official drought still in place. This prolonged dry weather and significant demand has meant that reservoir and river levels across the region have been low, and extremely low in Cornwall.

We have been working around the clock to bring new supplies safely online, find and fix more leaks than ever before and help business and customers reduce their water usage.

The recent rainfall, alongside our proactive steps to increase supplies, has helped river and reservoir levels stabilise and slowly start to recover. However, reservoir levels remain low in the South West and especially low in Cornwall.

We took the difficult decision to introduce temporary restrictions for household customers this summer for Cornwall and a small part of North Devon, and these remain in place. While we are not currently modelling the need to introduce further restrictions, we are monitoring reservoir levels closely and following our published drought plan. If reservoir levels started to significantly decline again, this may mean the introduction of additional restrictions, such as asking businesses to only use water for essential purposes through a 'Non-Essential Use Ban'.

While this step is not currently necessary, and reservoir levels have stabilised and started to recover, I wanted to make contact to outline the support we are providing businesses in Cornwall to help reduce their usage as part of our ongoing steps to reduce the risks of further restrictions next year.

Businesses in Cornwall who order and install free water-saving devices from South West Water, or fix a leaky loo, will get £30 from the company on top of saving money from their bills and helping drive down water usage.

Usually, leaky supply pipes are the responsibility of the landowner, but South West Water is also offering to find and fix the largest leaks for free. This is as well as supplying and fitting flow moderators for holiday company owned static vans and lodges across Cornwall, helping reduce water usage at these sites.

We are also asking businesses to get in touch and take up the offer of a free Water Efficiency Audit which helps identify areas where businesses could become more efficient every day and will include free devices, free fixes and free advice to help cut demand and reduce water bills now and into the future. We are offering this service, which is carried out by approved and qualified plumbers, to 100 Cornish businesses before the end of March 2023.

Finally, South West Water's new Water Efficiency Innovation Business Fund is also providing grants of up to £10,000 to help Cornish businesses deliver water-saving projects. From grey water systems, rainwater harvesting or even installing new water efficient appliances, businesses are encouraged to get in touch and apply for funding.

We hope these proactive steps will reduce the risk of restrictions which could impact businesses next year and make long term positive changes to organisations in Cornwall. We are actively promoting these initiatives and if you have members in Cornwall who could benefit please do direct them to www.southwestwater.co.uk/businesswatersaving.

Kind regards,



Steve Hayfield
Head of Customer Operations

Free water efficiency
support for businesses
across Cornwall



LEARN MORE