



## **What is a TUB, why and how is it implemented?**

### **What is a TUB?**

TUB stands for Temporary Use Ban, which is the phrase that is used in legislation when referring to what most of us would call a hosepipe ban. So, when we are communicating formally about this – for example advertising it in the press – we may have to refer to TUBs. But to make things simple, we'll be calling it hosepipe restrictions.

### **Why are you introducing hosepipe restrictions?**

We've had one of the driest springs on record, with Yorkshire being declared in drought. Usually, spring is a time when our groundwater sources and reservoirs continue to be topped up by changeable weather, but this has not been the case in 2025, with our reservoir stocks last increasing in the last week of January. While we're out 24/7 fixing leaks and looking after your water, we're asking customers to put down their hosepipes so we can let our reservoirs recover. Having hosepipe restrictions in place means we can consider applying for drought permits, which means we can change how we're operating and further protect water supplies and the environment.

### **When do the hosepipe restrictions start and what area does it cover?**

The hosepipe restrictions start on 11th July. Simply put, if your home receives its water supply from ESP Water in Yorkshire, then the restrictions will affect you. If you're a business or non-household customer, you are allowed to use a hosepipe if this is directly related to the use of water for your commercial purposes, but the restrictions do apply if you're not using a hosepipe for essential needs – there are some examples on our website to help.

### **What gives you the power to do this?**

Section 76 of the Water Industry Act 1991, as amended by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Further definitions may be found in the Water Use (Temporary Bans) Order 2010, which is available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/2231/contents/made>

### **How long will the restrictions last? When will the hosepipe restrictions finish?**

We can't say for certain, but the restrictions would need to be in place until we receive significant rainfall, and our reservoir levels return to a situation much closer to normal. We can't predict the weather, but we will not have the restrictions in place any longer than is absolutely necessary. We will be closely monitoring this and will keep everyone updated.

### **How will I know if I am affected by the restrictions?**

The hosepipe restrictions will come into place from 11th July for all ESP Water customers in Yorkshire. If you receive your clean water services from us, then you are affected by the restrictions.



If you're a business or non-household customer, you are allowed to use a hosepipe if this is directly related to the use of water for your commercial purposes, but the restrictions do apply if you're not using a hosepipe for essential needs – there are some examples on our website to help.

### **Are we in a drought?**

Yes, on 12th June the Environment Agency announced that Yorkshire had entered drought status following the driest spring in 132 years. Water companies use the EA's drought triggers to identify and plan how to act in different drought conditions. We monitor rainfall, water levels and other environmental factors to determine when we need to protect water supplies. However, we know that climate change will increase the pressures on our water resources and so our long-term Water Resources Management Plan is setting out the investment that we may require to ensure continued resilient supplies into the future.

A hosepipe ban is now known as a Temporary Usage Ban. Further definitions may be found in the Water Use (Temporary Bans) Order 2010, which is available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/2231/contents/made>

### **How much do we expect the hosepipe restrictions to save?**

Hosepipes use large amounts of water, so we're hoping that if our customers stop using them, we'll be able to save more water. We know from last time that introducing hosepipe restrictions does reduce water use and it's an important part of our drought plan. Our plan determines what steps we need to take, and we need to introduce hosepipe restrictions now so that we can support the application for drought permits.



## **Water resources**

### **How serious is the situation?**

We've had an extremely dry spring and the drought conditions have challenged our water resources overall. With little rainfall to replenish our stocks and storage, our reservoir levels are looking low for this time of year. We're doing everything we can to find and fix leaks as quickly as we can, but we can all do our bit to use less and save more water. Even turning off the tap while cleaning your teeth will help. Visit our website for tips and information [www.espug.com](http://www.espug.com).

### **Are we going to run out of water?**

The actions we are taking now are designed to protect water supplies so that all our customers have the water they need when they need it. By introducing hosepipe restrictions, we're hoping to reduce water usage which will help to conserve the water in our reservoirs and also help them to top back up when we do have some rain. We're doing everything we can to find and fix leaks as quickly as we can, but we can all do our bit to use less and save more water. Even turning off the tap while cleaning your teeth will help. Visit our website for tips and information [www.espug.com](http://www.espug.com).

### **What impact has the weather had on resources?**

The warm and dry weather has meant that we are using more water, especially at peak times. As the dry weather continues, our reservoirs are also lower than we would like, so we're asking customers to put down their hosepipes as they waste a lot of water. By introducing hosepipe restrictions, we're hoping to reduce water usage, which will help to conserve the water in our reservoirs and also help them to top back up when we do have some rain.

### **When new houses are built, is the increase in demand for water considered? Where do these new houses get their water from?**

Planning for population growth is a key consideration in our long-term Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP). We use population and property forecasts from Local Authority Development Plans and from the Office for National Statistics. These are used to help us forecast future demand for water, so we can determine if there is a requirement for further demand management or new sources of water. Our current WRMP is available here: <https://espug.com/documents/2024/10/water-resource-management-plan.pdf/>

## **Cans and Can'ts**

### **What does it mean and what is that I can and cannot do?**

We've had an extremely dry spring, and, because of this, our reservoir levels are lower than we would like. In order to reduce demand and give our reservoirs chance to recover, we are putting hosepipe restrictions in place from 11th July, which would mean the following activities are prohibited:

- Watering a garden using a hosepipe
- Cleaning private vehicles or boats using a hosepipe
- Watering plants with a hosepipe on a domestic or other non-commercial premises
- Filling or maintaining a domestic swimming, paddling pool, hot tub or coldwater plunge pool
- Using a hosepipe for domestic recreational use
- Filling or maintaining a domestic pond or ornamental fountain using a hosepipe
- Cleaning walls or windows of domestic premises using a hosepipe
- Cleaning paths or patios using a hosepipe
- Cleaning other artificial outdoor surfaces using a hosepipe

Customers can still undertake the above activities if they use mains water from a bucket or watering can; or use water that is not sourced from the mains such as grey water, rainwater from a water butt through a hosepipe, or private boreholes for example. Hosepipes use a 1000 litre of water an hour, but a standard size bucket may only use 10 litres.

### **Will I be able to wash my car?**

We're encouraging our customers to think twice about cleaning their car at the moment. If you still feel you need to wash the muck off, you can do so with a bucket and sponge. Or, you can just give the windows, mirrors, lights and number plates a quick clean.

Hosepipes use approximately a 1000 litres of water an hour. A standard size bucket may only use 10 litres. We would really appreciate if everyone could look at ways to use methods which are much less wasteful.

Commercial car wash businesses will still be operating, as the restrictions currently cover only domestic type uses. We're working closely with our non-household retailers to encourage businesses to reduce their usage where they can.

### **Will I be able to water my garden with a sprinkler?**

No. Sprinklers are covered by the restrictions. In just one hour a sprinkler uses as much water as a family of four would typically use in a day. It would be great if you could use a watering can instead. There is advice on the RHS website ([www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)) about how to care for lawns, for example, during hot spells the advice is that grass can be left to turn brown as it will bounce back to green once the rains return.

### **I have a water fountain in the garden, can I continue to use it?**



Most water fountains operate by recycling a small amount of water drawn from the same body of water into which it pours water. If this is the case, you may continue to operate it. If, however, it needs to be replenished with water from a hosepipe, you cannot use it while restrictions are in place, unless its purpose is to supply sufficient oxygen to water in a nearby pond to keep fish healthy.

**What if I have an irrigation system for my garden or allotment?**

Irrigation systems may be used if it is a fixed drip or trickle irrigation watering system, connected to a metered water supply. The system must be fitted with a pressure reducing valve and a timer and the system must place water drip by drip directly onto the soil surface or beneath the soil surface without any surface run off. It must not disperse water through the air using a jet or mist.

If the system is not like this then it cannot be used when connected to mains water. However, irrigation systems may be used when connected to a grey water or rainwater recycling system ( i.e. not attached to the mains system).

**Can I use my hosepipe via bottled water and a funnel for my colonic irrigation system?**

The restrictions focus on the use of mains water only. So, if the water is not drawn from the mains, then a hosepipe can be used.

**Can I use a hosepipe to transport rainwater from a water butt?**

Yes.

**Why can the car jet wash use a hosepipe, but I can't? They will use more water than me. And what about commercial car washes? They use loads of water.**

Many commercial car washes recycle and reuse water. We need to strike the right balance between water efficiency and ensuring that businesses are not severely impacted. There are some good water efficient products out there which use much less water than a traditional hosepipe. We're working closely with our non-household retailers to encourage businesses to reduce their usage where they can.

**Can I use a hosepipe for my allotment or vegetable garden?**

A hosepipe can be used for watering food crops but not for general flowers and plants.

Where you can, we'd encourage you to use a watering can to save on the volume of water which is used through traditional hosepipes. It's best to water in the morning or evening, as that means the water won't evaporate quickly in the sunshine.

**I've spent a lot of money on my garden/allotment – if it all dies are you going to reimburse me?**

You will still be able to water your garden using a watering can.

**Can I still fill the water tanks on my motor home with my hosepipe?**



You can fill up your internal water tanks using a hosepipe at home or on a campsite provided that this water is for domestic use i.e. washing, cooking and flushing toilets. The hosepipe restrictions do not allow owners to wash the motorhome itself using a hosepipe.

**If I fill my watering can up with my hosepipe have I breached the restrictions?**

Yes – the restrictions include using a hosepipe to fill a container with water supplied by ESP Water, such as from the tap. You can use a hosepipe to fill your can up from another source – like a rainwater butt or private borehole supply.

**Will I be able to fill a hot tub or cold plunge pool?**

No, as hot tubs hold large amounts of water like paddling pools, customers can not fill them up with a hosepipe. You can use a bucket to fill it up – but please make every drop count and help protect the environment and our precious water supplies by only using water where you really need to.

**Can I fill my swimming or paddling pool or hot tub during the restrictions?**

You can refill a pool or hot tub with a hand-held container. You cannot fill a hot tub with a hosepipe. You cannot fill a domestic private pool using a hosepipe, unless these circumstances are relevant:

- The pool needs to be filled during construction
- The pool is used for a medical reason
- The pool is used for veterinary treatment
- Fish or aquatic animals are kept in the pool

**Can I fill a newly purchased hot tub or exercise spa?**

Yes, you can fill a newly purchased hot tub or exercise spa that is a fixed structure from empty after construction using a hosepipe. But if you are able to delay building the hot tub/spa until the restrictions are lifted, this would really help. Once it has been filled after purchase, a hosepipe cannot be used for any subsequent filling. A hosepipe can be used to fill or maintain a hot tub that is designed, constructed or adapted for use in the course of a programme of medical treatment.

**Can I top up a swimming pool with a water conservation recycling system using a hose?**

This is defined as a pool with a permanent filter system which allows continuous circulation of the water, and no regular discharge is necessary to maintain water quality. Only discharge allowed is backwashing to clean filters as part of regular maintenance. Ideally backwashing of filters should be no more than once a week for not more than a few minutes at time. However, you cannot use a hose to top up the swimming pool.

**If I have a medical need for a hot tub, can I use a hosepipe to top up the water?**

No, you can fill a hot tub with a hand-held container, not a hosepipe. Customers on the Priority Services Register (PSR) are exempted from the restrictions.



**Can the hot tub water be used on the garden?**

In reality, there should be very little harm to the flora and fauna in your garden, but it may be more useful to put the water into water butts, or use it for cleaning items such as greenhouses, or vehicles. To protect the environment, please never put the water from a hot tub into a watercourse (such as a river or stream) as this can damage wildlife.

**My hot tub is part of my business offering to paying customers, am I included in the current hosepipe restrictions?**

No, a hot tub used as part of a business is not included in the restrictions.

**I have a holiday let; can I refill hot tubs at the property?**

If you pay council tax on this holiday let, you are a domestic customer and, therefore, must observe the water use ban and not use a hosepipe. You can fill a hot tub with a hand-held container, not a hosepipe. If you pay business rates, you are a commercial customer and do not fall under the restrictions and can use a hosepipe.

**What happens to service and maintenance contracts in terms of using water to top up the hot tub or swimming pool?**

Professional service companies are able to maintain and top up hot tubs and pools using a hosepipe from the domestic tap water supply, where it is needed for health and safety reasons. They should give you advice on minimising water loss. They can also bring in water to the pool from their business premises. Service contracts are highly recommended so that the client can achieve the most efficient use of precious water resources and minimise their energy and chemical costs.

**If the legal restrictions are breached, would it be the hot tub or swimming pool company using the hosepipe, or the customer that would be held responsible?**

Breaching the restrictions is a criminal offence under Section 76 of the Water Industry Act 1991 (as amended). The person using the hosepipe would be liable to a fine.

**I build, repair and/or refurbish swimming pools; can the swimming pool be filled on completion?**

Providing the filling of the pool is part of its construction, or a significant repair or a refurbishment, then this does not fall within the restrictions, and therefore a hosepipe can be used. The first fill of the pool should only be filled by the specialist business contracted to carry out the work. Thereafter, the pool can only be filled with a handheld container, not a hosepipe connected to the mains supply.

**I'm building a swimming pool - can I fill it during construction?**

Yes, the pool can be filled with a hosepipe where necessary to complete the construction. But if you are able to delay building the pool until the restrictions are lifted, this would really help. Thereafter, the pool can only be filled with a hand-held container, not a hosepipe.

**I specialise in swimming pool maintenance; how does this affect me, and can I use a hosepipe to top up the pool?**

If the pool is a commercial one, then a hosepipe can be used to top it up.

If the pool is a domestic one, a hosepipe cannot be used to top up the pool unless this is done by a service company as part of a maintenance contract.

The use of a hosepipe connected to the mains supply to fill a domestic swimming pool is prohibited unless it is necessary as part of its construction, significant refurbishment, or for a particular health and safety purpose. Examples of significant refurbishment include works that might entail major alterations to the shape or size of the pool, or to its immediate surroundings, repairs of significant leaks, or the installation of a completely new liner. Minor repairs, such as the replacement of tiles, would not qualify as significant refurbishment. Ideally, water from the domestic pool to be refurbished or repaired should be retained in a temporary structure, subject to any space restrictions on site and depending on the suitability of the water being retained. Where it is necessary for the water level in the pool to be maintained to a specific level, (i.e. to support safety covers and liners, and for filtration) then top ups can be made using handheld containers such as buckets.

**We are keen surfers and have expensive wetsuits that need to be hosed down with hosepipe- is this permitted?**

No, this use of a hosepipe is not allowed. You can still use water to wash your wetsuit such as a bucket or hose attachment. But please avoid spreading non-native and/or invasive species.

**Can I still clean my boat?**

You can't use a hosepipe to clean private leisure boats, except:

- any areas enclosed by walls and a roof
- where fouling is causing increased fuel consumption or where engines are designed to be cleaned with a hosepipe
- to prevent or control the spread of non-native and/or invasive species
- if the vessel is your primary residence
- if you are a business where boat cleaning is done as a service to customers

**Can we fill onboard drinking and washing water tanks in boats (and caravans)?**

Yes, you can fill onboard drinking and washing water tanks in boats and caravans as these falls under the health & safety exception. In addition, these do not fall into prohibited activities.

**Do restrictions simply concentrate the same lock usage (and hence water use) into a shorter period?**

Experiences from the Canal and River Trust shows that where they have implemented similar restrictions in the past, they have subsequently seen decreases in total lock usage. However, the water resource savings do vary across different canals and between years.



### **Can I fill the water tank in my caravan or motor home with a hosepipe?**

Yes. This is not covered by the restrictions if the water is to be used for washing, cooking or sanitation purposes.

### **I've just had turf laid. I need to water it, otherwise it's a waste of money!**

Under the terms of the hosepipe restrictions, you can water newly laid turf for 28 days with a hosepipe. However, we would hope that anyone who needs to do so would respect the spirit of the restrictions and consider how you can use water wisely whilst doing so.

### **I've put grass seed down; can I water this with a hosepipe?**

You can water your grass seed for the first 28 days with a hosepipe, after that you'll need to use a watering can. Please use the hosepipe sparingly and try to use it for a short amount of time. If it's raining one day, think about whether you need to use your hose.

We're planning a charity car wash – and will be using pressure washers. Are we exempt?

No, you can only hold the car wash if you do not use a hosepipe or a pressure washer. You could use buckets and sponges, which are a great way to reduce water usage.

### **Which vehicles CAN be washed with a hosepipe during the hosepipe restrictions?**

- While we'd prefer everyone to use a low water usage apparatus during the restrictions, such as a bucket and sponge, there are some vehicles which can still be washed with a hosepipe. These are:
  - Public bus
  - Any vehicles covered by an organisation's "Goods Vehicle Operator's License"
  - Military vehicles
  - Snow ploughs and gritters
  - Emergency service vehicles (including those used by gas, electricity, water and telephone companies)
  - Hearses and accompanying funeral cars
  - Recovery vehicles (only if they're used exclusively for that purpose)
  - Tractors and agricultural vehicles
  - Mobile exhibition vehicles
  - Catering vehicles
  - Mobile shops
  - Mobile medical screening vehicles
  - Any vehicle of over 3.5 tonnes gross plated weight or (where there is no plated weight) an unladen weight of more than 1,525kg to transport goods for hire or reward or in connection with a trade or business.

Which vehicles CAN'T be washed with a hosepipe during the hosepipe restrictions?

- •Private car

- •Taxi
- •Limousine
- •Wedding Car
- •Private hire minibus
- •Private hire coach
- •Any other vehicle including those used in the course of running a business (e.g. white van)

**Are taxis exempt from the restrictions?**

A taxi is classed as a private motor vehicle and therefore is not exempt from the restrictions.

**I have a grass roof; can I use my hosepipe to water this?**

As not watering your grass roof could have health and safety implications, you are allowed to continue to use your hosepipe to do this.

**Can I take water from a lake or river and use my hosepipe from this source rather than the tap?**

We can't give permission for you to do this. You would have to contact the Environment Agency.

I am developing / extending my house – can I continue to use my hosepipe for this?

You can use a hosepipe for activities directly associated with your building work, e.g. mixing cement, but not for cleaning paths and roads unless for health and safety purposes. You can continue to water newly laid turf (until its 28 days old) with a hosepipe.

**Can I water trees planted in the last three planting seasons?**

You may water 'standard' trees planted in the last three planting seasons that cannot reasonably be hand-watered or watered with non-potable water. A 'standard' tree is a tree with a single stem with clear trunk [no side branches] for at least 1.8m above the ground.

**Can my gardener or landscaper still water my garden?**

No, they can't use a hosepipe on domestic or non-commercial gardens or plants. The only exception is for newly laid/sown lawns and new planting, which they can water with a hose for the first 28 days.

**If I fill my watering can with my hosepipe have I breached the restrictions?**

Yes, if your hosepipe is attached to a mains supply.

**Can I prewash houses prior to painting if done by jet wash? Also, for plastering (spray water as part of the application process)?**

If a commercial painting or maintenance company is working on a commercial property, then a hosepipe can be used.



If a commercial painting or maintenance company is working on a domestic property, then a hosepipe can be used.

If a domestic customer is working on a domestic property, then a hosepipe cannot be used. Water can be used through means of a bucket handheld container.

A domestic property is one that is subject to council tax; a commercial property is one that is subject to business rates.

**Prior to painting my house can I wash the outside walls with a Glyphosate (weed killer) and water mixture?**

If a commercial painting or maintenance company is working on a commercial property, then a hosepipe can be used.

If a commercial painting or maintenance company is working on a domestic property, then a hosepipe can be used.

If a domestic customer is working on a domestic property, then a hosepipe cannot be used. Water can be used through means of a bucket handheld container.

A domestic property is one that is subject to council tax; a commercial property is one that is subject to business rates.

**Can I water the garden with a hosepipe for a property used as a holiday let, hotel, or other commercially based (i.e. paid for) accommodation?**

Where the accommodation is not formally registered as a business, i.e. the property owner pays council tax, not business rates, any garden associated with the accommodation is classed as a domestic garden and falls under the restrictions. If the property owner pays business rates, this means you are a commercial customer and do not fall under the restrictions and can use a hosepipe.

## **What can customers do to help?**

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Use water wisely. There are lots of tips and advice on our website. Our top tips for saving water are:

- Please don't use a hosepipe until the restriction has been lifted, we'll let you know when that is.
- Re-use your bathwater or washing up water to water your gardens – it won't harm the plants
- If you've got a modern toilet with dual flush, use the short flush wherever possible
- Use a washing up bowl instead of letting the tap run – you can reduce wasted water by up to 50%!
- Use your dishwasher. You'll save yourself a job and often they use less water than washing dishes by hand – remember to do a full load each time.
- Turn off the tap while brushing your teeth, it'll save up to six litres of water per minute! For a family of four that could be up to 48 litres a day.
- Boil only what you need when you make a cuppa, many people overfill the kettle and the water just goes up in steam
- Water your garden with a watering can in the early morning or late evening, when less water is lost through evaporation
- Only wash full loads in your washing machine
- Use a bucket and sponge to wash your car, rather than a hosepipe; or try some of the new waterless car washing products
- Spend a minute less in the shower every day – if each member of a family of four spent one minute less in the shower they could save approximately 36 litres of water a day! Saving on hot water can also help you save on energy bills.

People can help by reporting leaks to us as soon as they see them. You can do this by phoning 0330 123 4201.

### **How can boaters help?**

The Canal and River Trust has top tips for boaters to help to save water. They include:

- Share locks where possible and make the best use of the water available;
- Make sure paddles are fully closed once you've passed through a lock;
- Aim for minimal contact when navigating through locks by ensuring gates are fully open as you pass through. Pushing gates open using a boat can damage the gate lining, increasing its leakage. Marina owners, particularly those with hire fleets, can help by encouraging boaters to follow these simple tips:
- Please only use the water point to fill up your water tank to use for drinking water and hygiene purposes.
- Please do not use the water point to wash your boat with a hose or jet washer.



## **Exemptions and Priority Services**

### **What about people who are elderly, registered disabled or are a blue badge holder and can't carry a watering can?**

If you are a blue badge holder, on our Priority Services register, or our WaterSure tariff for medical reasons, then you will be an exception to the restrictions. However, we would still encourage you to think about how you could save and re-using water around the home as much as you can. People should not put themselves at risk unnecessarily. If you know someone who may struggle to use a watering can, they can apply for an exemption.

### **I'm a Priority Services customer – would the restrictions apply to me?**

No. We are writing to all Priority Services customers proactively to tell them that we would really like their help and if they can refrain from using their hosepipe that would be great but if they do need to use them, they – along with Blue Badge holders – would be exempt.

### **Why are Priority Services customers and Blue Badge holders exempt from the restrictions?**

People who are registered disabled, a blue badge holder or a Priority Services customer will be exempt from the hosepipe restrictions, but we would still ask them to be mindful of the amount of water they use. We don't want anyone to put themselves at risk unnecessarily and recognise that some of these customers will struggle with the restrictions which will be in place.

I'm a blue badge holder / Priority Services customer, but other people in my house aren't. Is the entire household exempt from the restrictions?

No, only the blue badge holder or people registered as a Priority Services customer are covered by the exemption. Our intention is to support those who are unable to use an alternative to a hosepipe. I use lots of water for medical reasons, am I exempt? We're writing to all our customers who are on our WaterSure tariff for medical reasons to let them know that the hosepipe restrictions don't apply to them. We know that not everyone can cut back, especially if they rely on water for medical or wellbeing reasons.

## **Animals**

### **Can I use a hosepipe for my animals (e.g. horses / dogs)?**

You can use your hosepipe to clean animals and their areas, e.g. yard or stable. We would encourage you to be as efficient as possible when you do this.

### **Can I use my hosepipe to fill a trough for my animals?**

Yes, you can use a hosepipe to fill the trough for your animals.

### **Can I keep my pond topped up if it contains fish or other aquatic animals?**

Yes, you should keep your pond topped up to a minimum level to safeguard the fish but please remember that tap water needs conditioning before it is used to top up a pond.

## **Businesses**

### **Why are businesses treated differently?**

Legally, some business activity is exempt from the restrictions. This is to prevent economic harm and also takes into account companies' health and safety and other legal obligations. Many businesses also invest in low water pressure apparatus and water recycling which means they are more water efficient.

This is based on the legislation plus industry guidance which has incorporated consultation with trade organisations impacted by previous droughts. For example, car washes, National Plant Collections and watering active parts of sports grounds are exempt from the restrictions.

### **Am I affected by the restrictions?**

As a business, you will be allowed to use a hosepipe if this is directly related to the use of water for your commercial purposes. There are restrictions on business customers using a hosepipe if not for those essential needs – so using a hosepipe to clean a path outside your business property, for example, would be covered by the restrictions. There are more specific examples in the questions below and further information on our website.

At what point, if any, will the water resources situation affect businesses and commercial use?

We're continually monitoring the situation. We're not planning to impose further water use restrictions at the moment. Clearly, if the dry weather continues for a prolonged period, we may reach the point where further restrictions could be required. We would need a statutory order to put this in place. This is set out in our statutory drought plan.

### **I have a private supply, e.g. borehole, can I still use a hosepipe?**

Yes.



**What if I need to use a hosepipe for my business?**

You can use hosepipes and sprinklers where it is directly related to your day-to-day business excluding the watering of gardens. We would, however, encourage the use of low water usage technology.

**What if I use a customer's hosepipe for my business, i.e. to clean wheelie bins, water a customer's flowers or valet their car?**

You can use customers' hosepipes and sprinklers where it is directly related to your day-to-day business excluding the watering of domestic gardens. We would, however, encourage the use of low water usage technology, such as a low water use pressure washer wherever possible.

**I have a standpipe usage licence – does this affect filling mobile sources up and metering?**

Please only use standpipes where absolutely necessary. You can only use specific hydrants at strategic points according to your licence. You must use the hydrants you have been given permission to use to reduce the effect of pressure on the network. Make sure your licence is up-to-date and ensure fittings are working properly and not wasting water.

**I am developing/extending my property can I continue to use my hosepipe for this?**

You can use a hosepipe for activities directly associated with your building work, e.g. mixing cement, but not for cleaning paths and roads unless for health and safety purposes. You can continue to water newly laid turf (until its 28 days old) with a hosepipe.

**Can I carry out fire sprinkler testing and flow testing of fire hydrants?**

Yes, this activity isn't prohibited by the restrictions. However, where possible we would ask that the testing of these systems is delayed until the restrictions have been lifted.

**Do the restrictions impact a hospital?**

No, hospitals are exempt from the restrictions. If certain activities, like maintaining public gardens, can be done using alternative methods - such as watering cans or more water-efficient products - then these practices are encouraged and permitted to continue during the temporary restrictions.

**Do the restrictions impact a prison?**

No, prisons are exempt from the restrictions.

**I operate a care home, can I still use a hosepipe for a communal garden?**

Under the restrictions, you can't use a hosepipe to water your communal garden. Instead, try using a watering can or consider alternatives such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come



with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions, so you can keep your garden thriving without any worries.

#### **Do the restrictions cover schools and universities?**

Not all activities are covered by the temporary restrictions, for example, cleaning the windows of non-domestic buildings and washing pathways for health and safety reasons.

Under the restrictions, you can't use a hosepipe to water your communal garden. Instead, try using a watering can or consider alternatives such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions, so you can keep your garden thriving without any worries. However, all water users are urged to conserve water whenever they can.

#### **I own a garden centre, how am I affected?**

If you're growing these flowers to sell or for commercial use, then you can continue to water these with a hosepipe. We would, however, encourage the use of a watering can or other water efficient devices such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more waterefficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions.

If you have a flowerbed on your premises which isn't for sale, then you cannot use a hosepipe for this.

Please note, filling displayed ornamental fountains with a hosepipe is also prohibited unless this is necessary to supply sufficient oxygen to the water in a pond to keep fish healthy.

#### **We have an ornamental fountain/water feature which we operate in public parks and town centres. Are these exempt?**

You cannot fill or maintain an ornamental fountain/water feature with a hosepipe while the restrictions are in place.

#### **I've just planted some ornamental plants for a client; can I use a hosepipe/sprinkler to water these?**

You have up to 28 days from when these are planted to use a hosepipe or sprinkler, after that you'd need to use an alternative method, such as a watering can or products such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions, so you can keep your flowers thriving without any worries.

#### **I have to maintain planters containing trees on the side of a highway – can I use a hosepipe for this?**

Under the restrictions, you can't use a hosepipe for this, you'd have to use an alternative such as a watering can or products such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come





with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions.

**I own a taxi/private hire vehicle, can I use a hosepipe to keep this clean?**

You wouldn't be able to use your hosepipe for this; you'd need to find an alternative way to keep the vehicle clean such as using a bucket and sponge.

**I run a wedding car business and need to keep these clean for someone's big day. Can I use a hosepipe to do this?**

You wouldn't be able to use your hosepipe for this; you'd need to find an alternative way to keep the cars clean such as using a bucket and sponge.

**We're planning a charity car wash – and will be using pressure washers. Are we exempt?**

No, but you can hold a charity car wash as long as you use buckets and sponges and not hosepipes or pressure washers.

**I own a limousine company and need to use a hosepipe to keep these clean. Am I exempt?**

Limousines are not exempt. They'd need to be washed by another method, either with a bucket and sponge or low water usage apparatus. We're not saying you can't use water; we just want people to use less wasteful methods.

**We are a window cleaning business – how are we affected?**

As a commercial business you are exempt from the restrictions. Can I use a hosepipe to clean graffiti from a building? Where the graffiti is a hate crime, insulting or offensive a hosepipe can be used to clean this.

**Why are councils still cleaning windows, buildings and washing public vehicles, etc.?**

Not all activities are covered by the temporary restrictions, e.g. cleaning the windows of non-domestic buildings or washing public service vehicles. However, ALL water users are urged to conserve water whenever they can, and we have given water saving advice to councils and other commercial customers. Should the situation deteriorate, consideration would be given to applying for powers to restrict other activities.

**I manage a local car dealership. Can we still use the jet wash to wash customers' cars? We normally valet them before they go out.**

Hosepipes can be used but only where the vehicles are for sale or where you offer a car wash/valeting service that customers have paid for specifically either as a single service or included in a service package. We would, however, ask that you look for ways to use your water as efficiently as possible. Hosepipes use a thousand litres of water an hour, that's more than a family of four use in a day.



The use of a hosepipe to clean customer-owned vehicles as a complimentary or free service would not be permitted. You can still use water in a bucket, low water-use jet washer or waterless car washing products that are now available. A bucket and sponge may only use 10 litres. We're not saying you can't use water; we just want people to use less wasteful methods.

**Can car jet washes, car washes and car valeting businesses use a hosepipe?**

Commercial car washes are not affected by the temporary usage restrictions.

**I need to use a hosepipe to wash out an engine, can I do this?**

Yes, this is exempt from the restrictions.

**Are golf clubs or sports grounds, etc. affected by the restrictions?**

Where there is a health and safety requirement to water an area of sports ground this is permitted, but only for the active playing area. We would still encourage other means of watering that are not as water demanding as hosepipes and sprinklers.

**Can a council park use their water play area during the hosepipe restrictions?**

The park splash area is exempt as it's not a domestic pool or domestic recreational area, but we'd clearly welcome any measures the council could take to reduce water wastage during the restrictions.

**We're a council and need hosepipes or sprinklers to water hanging baskets and floral displays in our town centre locations or parks.**

During the period of the restrictions, hosepipes and sprinklers cannot be used for watering floral beds or displays or hanging baskets in public locations. We welcome every organisation's support to use water as efficiently as they can, particularly when it comes to carrying out tasks which are part of regular maintenance activities.

In terms of alternatives to hosepipes and sprinklers, there are products such as drip or trickle irrigation systems, fitted with pressure reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions.

We appreciate that local authorities do take their own role in using water as carefully as possible seriously and if activities, such as public garden maintenance or watering town centre floral displays, can be done using alternative means, such as using watering cans, or alternative more water efficient products, then this is welcomed and is allowed to continue during this period of temporary restrictions. Reducing the amount of watering which is routinely undertaken will also be hugely helpful.

**I want to make sure I'm prepared for hosepipe restrictions in the future. Can you help me with my on-site storage?**



This isn't a service ESP Water provides. Business continuity planning and on-site storage is the responsibility of customers. Your retailer might be able to assist with these services, so please check with them.

**I've got a leak on my site. Can you come and fix it?**

Your retailer may be able to help with this, or you may need to appoint a contractor to do this for you. This isn't something that ESP Water would help you with if the leak is on your site.

**Will this have any impact on my commercial water bill?**

You need to contact your retailer to discuss any implications the restrictions may have on your bill. Since April 2017, all business customers in England are served by licensed retail providers. You will be able to find details of who your retailer is on your water or sewerage bill, if you're unsure of who this is, we can tell you.

What can I do to reduce my consumption? Is there anything I can do to help?

The dry and warm weather means we're seeing a massive increase in water consumption across the region. Simple ways you can help include:

- Check for leaks and repair any dripping taps or loos used in the workplace
- Encourage employees to look at ways to use less water in the workplace and ask them to turn off hosepipes, report any leaks and identify any processes that could be wasting water
- Employee suggestion schemes can help to identify water saving ideas which could save the business money
- If your business has any grassed areas, please avoid using sprinklers. Lawns will soon green up again once it rains
- Take a look at our water saving tips at [www.espug.com](http://www.espug.com).

**We operate a pool for religious ceremonies, can I still fill this?**

Yes, a hosepipe can be used for pools within places of worship or community pools that are used as part of a religious ceremony.

**I have an allotment, can I still water my crops with a hosepipe?**

Yes, a hosepipe can be used to water food crops at domestic premises or private allotments, where this cannot be reasonably done via a watering can.



## **Alternatives for hosepipes**

### **Is it safe to use the dish or shower water on my plants?**

There is lots of helpful information about re-using water for gardening on the RHS website:

[www.rhs.org.uk](http://www.rhs.org.uk)

Plants can be watered with shower, bath, kitchen and washing machine water (from rinse cycles). There should be no problem with small-scale, short-term use of dish or shower water to tide plants over in summer drought. An exception is on edible crops, due to the risk of contamination from pathogens in the water.

## **How we enforce the restrictions**

### **What gives you the right/authority to restrict hosepipe usage?**

These prohibited water uses are covered by section 76 of the Water Industry Act 1991, as amended by the Flood and Water Management Act 2010. Further definitions may be found in the Water Use (Temporary Bans) Order 2010, which is available at:

<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukxi/2010/2231/contents/made>

### **What action will you take if I do use a hosepipe?**

We hope that our customers would respect the restrictions, if not, we do have the ability to enforce it, and customers could be subject to a £1,000 personal fine which will be paid to the Treasury. Many customers have already voluntarily been cutting back on using water guzzling devices to do their bit and we are really grateful for that.

### **How can you enforce this?**

We are asking our customers to help us by abiding by the hosepipe restrictions and hope that they will. The legislation gives a court power to fine customers who ignore it up to £1,000, but we hope it won't come to that. Even so, it's important people respect the restrictions when it is in place from 11th July. It is only temporary, and normal service will resume as soon as we can.

### **Are you asking your customers to report their neighbours if they see them breaking the restrictions?**

We will be asking everyone to adhere to the restrictions. If we are told repeatedly about someone breaking the restrictions, the first thing we do is remind them of their obligations. This is usually enough. However, if they continue to use a hosepipe, we may escalate our enforcement accordingly.

### **Will ESP Water have patrols on the streets when the restrictions come in?**

Our colleagues are regularly out and about as part of their day-to-day work. If they spot people breaching the restrictions as they go about their day-to-day jobs, they may speak to them, or we may send them a letter reminding them of their obligations.



**What do I do if I think I'm an exception to the restrictions?**

If you think you should be an exception to the restrictions you need to contact us