

Things to do before DAY ZERO in Cape Town

Dear Friends

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The City of Cape Town **has activated water rationing to forcibly lower water usage** in line with water restrictions across the metro as **STAGE 2** of its critical water shortages disaster plan.

Water usage currently remains dangerously above long-term sustainable levels.

If **Day Zero** arrives, the city will move into full-scale **Emergency Stage 3**. This means that water supplied to households and businesses will be cut off. There will not be enough water in the system to **water**. These are hospitals and clinics, stand-pipes in informal settlements and the 200 points of distribution (PoDs) where people can collect their allocated 25 litres per person per day. All other water supplied by the city **will be cut off**. Many schools may have to close if they don't have their own safe supply from boreholes or rainwater tanks. Many businesses and shopping malls will not be able to operate unless they can provide temporary (off-mains) toilets and drinking water.

If **Day Zero** arrives, it's likely that you will have to queue, carry and in some cases, treat your own water. You should be getting to know your neighbours better to assist and partner with them where possible.

WHAT CAN I DO TO PLAN FOR NO RUNNING WATER, BEFORE DAY ZERO?

The following suggestions* have been made to survive without water for +- 30 days.

1. **Don't panic**, plan carefully, spend wisely and find a friend to share solutions with you.
2. Collect +- 30 cans of human and pet food. If shops close, so does your food supply.
3. **TURN GEYSER OFF TO PREVENT OVERHEATING – CLOSE ALL WATER TAPS IMMEDIATELY.**
4. Stock up on 5L bottled water. Keep about 30 x 5 litres per person of water available for essential use before day zero. You require +-2L (8 glasses) of drinking water per person per day, 3L can be used for cleaning and 1L of water for each pet per day*. Keep a bottle of Milton's to sterilize your water and bottles. We should all have some emergency reserves of drinking water safely stored at home, BUT you are not allowed to stockpile large volumes of water from municipal supplies. **DO NOT** fill up your rainwater tanks using municipal drinking water. You can buy 5-litre bottled water during your weekly shop and keep that safe as you prepare for **Day Zero**. Make sure the bottles are clean and kept in a cool, dark place if possible. *Prices range from R 10.00 – R 19.00 per 5L bottle**.
5. Ensure that you have sufficient **prescription medication** available e.g. Insulin, heart pills chronic medication etc. A 30 to a 60-day supply is recommended should pharmacies close.
6. **Keep cash available** for emergency purchases – ATM's and shops may not be safe to access money. Buy sufficient airtime and electricity. Keep your petrol tank full as petrol station may also close through this time.

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7. Think about alternative 'dry' sanitation systems at home when the toilets cannot be flushed – Buckets with sealed lids are advisable to retain odours and hygiene.
8. Store "wet wipes" for cleansing and cleaning. Dispose of toilet paper into a wastebasket and not into the toilet. Double up on hand sanitation liquid and large plastic bags for your food waste which attracts flies/maggots and gives off bad odours.
9. Stock up on disposable plates, cups, and eating utensils. Cleaning up after meals will be a challenge as you will not have water.
10. Keep important emergency and family contact numbers visible and accessible.
11. Plan ahead with your employer if you need to stay at home if the children's schools are closed. The CBD may also not be accessible for commuters by rail or by vehicle.
12. Talk to your family, neighbours, community groups, body corporate, colleagues, boss, school principal and governing body about contingency plans for **Day Zero** and how you are going to look after each other and get through this together.
13. Perfect the art of the sponge bath or use "wet wipes" to clean and cleanse. Re-use clothing by hanging your clothes to air away odours in an open area.
14. Have some easy healthy freezer meals on hand but **canned food is best** if the power goes off.
15. No matter how many buckets you have, you will need more. In addition, make sure the buckets you have are manageable and light enough to carry when filled with water.

Please ensure that all taps are closed when not in use to prevent damage/flooding when the **water supply is restored**. Ensure that you take the necessary steps, such as speaking to your insurer if possible, to mitigate potential damage and for fire prevention. When **supply is restored**, the water may appear to be cloudy from the extreme pressure reduction exercise. Please do not waste the initial water. Use it for flushing and washing. **Do not exceed the current 50L per person per day requirements**.

Let's work together by reducing our personal consumption of water to 25L per day and attempt to delay day zero. Maintain a good sense of humour. Treat the experience as a learning experience and a grand adventure in self-reliance. Help your neighbour, **make a new friend** and you will get through this time. This article is merely a suggestion and should be used for planning only*. Share this article with your friends and family.

Phases of the critical water shortages disaster plan for Cape Town.

Phase 1: Activated: water rationing through extreme pressure reduction and limiting supply

Phase 2: Disaster restrictions (water collection points) **active and ready for use.**

Phase 3: Full-scale disaster implementation (extreme rationing at distribution points) **pending.**

Cape Town is situated in a water-scarce region. Climatic unpredictability, such as this protracted drought and reduced rainfall, must be viewed as the new and normal aspect of our lives in Cape Town, the Western Cape, and many other parts of South Africa. The City of Cape Town is well equipped to handle climate disasters, and residents are encouraged to continue planning and saving water. Cape Town is situated in a water-scarce region. Climatic unpredictability, protracted drought and reduced rainfall, must be viewed as the new and normal aspect of our lives in Cape Town, the Western Cape, and many other parts of South Africa. More information can be accessed at <http://www.capetown.gov.za/>

*Disclaimer: This article makes suggestions and should be used for planning only. No claim or liability can be made against the author of this article and no responsibility will be taken for the validity of the information. Information provided has been sourced from various websites to provide planning alternatives.

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We care at Harcourts Dunn

