

Water Shortage Standard Operating Procedure (July 2021)

The following Levels can be in place for the whole of the Bay of Plenty, or only apply to certain Focus Zones. Focus Zones can refer to specific waterbodies, whole catchments, multiple catchments, or districts. The Focus Zones will always be identified via a Focus Zone map.



No Water Shortage Concerns – Streams, groundwater and rainfall within expected range. No issues of concern

- Normal BAU review of data from Council's monitoring network



Reducing Water Availability – Lower than expected levels of any of the following occurring: Rainfall, stream flows, groundwater and/or soil moisture

- Appoint Water Shortage Manager
- Increased review of stream, soil and groundwater state
- Analysis of short and long-range weather forecasts
- Review and refresh (if needed) Stakeholders Communications Plan
- Update webpage
- Commence issuing of regular Situation Reports (usually 1-2 monthly)



Impending Water Shortage – Any or all of the following occurring: Continued reduction in stream flows and/or groundwater levels, lack of rainfall i.e. growing risk to waterway health

- Closer assessment of forecasts, rainfall, stream, soil and groundwater state
- Convene subject matter expert meeting to evaluate all available data
- Increase frequency of Situation Reports (at least monthly) – place on website
- Define catchments/waterbodies of interest (known as Focus Zones)
- Generate list of potentially affected consent holders (ensure contact details are accurate)
- Communicate as per Stakeholders Communications Plan – keep webpage updated
- Specifically, inform consent holders, iwi/hapū, Councillors, stakeholders, local authorities within Focus Zones of elevated risk of water shortage event



Water Shortage Event – Low flow and/or drought conditions affecting waterways i.e. risk to waterway health

- Focus Zone Situation Reports increased to every two weeks (unless no change)
- Convene Water Shortage Decision Group (WSDG) made up of at least four of the following: GM Regulatory Services, GM Integrated Catchments, Environmental Data Services Manager, Science Manager and a Regulatory Compliance Manager (or a senior/experienced delegate)
- The WSDG shall review recommendations from Water Shortage Manager, including any possible Water Shortage Direction before recommending to CE for approval
- CE approves issuing a Water Shortage Direction as allowed for by s.329 RMA
- Inform affected consent holders, iwi/hapū, Councillors and stakeholders at least 5 working days prior to issuing a Water Shortage Direction (NB: this may not always be possible)
- Increase compliance monitoring of consented and unconsented (where possible) water takes and discharges (if relevant)
- Water Shortage Manager to review Water Shortage Direction every 14 days. Decision to cancel or reissue to be reviewed by WSDG, prior to CE approval (if decision is to re-issue)