

Watering Schedule Policy

Policy No:	ENG-007
Council Resolution:	019/26
Date Adopted:	20 January 2026
Review Date:	20 January 2028
Version No:	1.0
Responsible Officer:	Director of Engineering Services

1. Purpose

This policy regulates outdoor water usage to ensure peak demand is reduced, thereby avoiding costly capital upgrades to water infrastructure while maintaining adequate flow and pressure to all consumers.

The policy establishes permanent watering schedules that apply across the Murweh Shire, documents the process for granting exemptions, and sets out the enforcement framework for non-compliance.

2. Scope

1.1. Application

This policy applies to all customers—residential, commercial, and industrial—that receive water from Council through a metered water connection in the following water supply areas:

- Charleville
- Augathella
- Morven

1.2. Exclusions

This policy does not apply to:

- Properties using an alternative water supply (rainwater tank, bore, dam) that is not connected to Council's reticulated water system
- Water used for firefighting or emergency purposes
- Domestic use inside premises (drinking, cooking, washing, cleaning, heating, and cooling)
- Water used by Council for essential public infrastructure maintenance

3. Principles

Council will apply the following principles when implementing this policy:

- **Water conservation:** Water is a limited and valuable resource that must be used efficiently
- **Equity:** All customers share responsibility for managing peak demand
- **Transparency:** Restriction levels and enforcement processes are clearly communicated
- **Proportionality:** Enforcement action is proportionate to the nature and frequency of the offence

4. Content

1.3. Need for Watering Schedules

Peak water demand occurs in summer due to outdoor watering. When most consumers water simultaneously, this creates significant stress on the reticulation network. This demand can be met by expensive upgrades to bores, reservoirs, pumps, and pipes, or alternatively by reducing the peak through watering schedules that allow only half the town to water at any one time.

In summer, watering hours are also restricted because there is strong evidence that watering during the heat of the day is ineffective and wasteful.

1.4. Legal Authority

Council has the legal authority to impose water restrictions under the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008:

- **Section 41(1)** provides the head of power for implementation of water restrictions
- **Section 41(2)** provides the conditions for restriction of water including climatic conditions, water conservation needs, and demand management
- **Section 43(5)** sets the maximum penalty for contravention of a water restriction

The State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999 provides the head of power for infringement notices issued under Section 43(5) of the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008.

1.5. Standard Watering Schedule (Level 1)

The following watering schedule applies to all potable water users in Charleville, Augathella, and Morven unless a higher restriction level is declared by Council resolution.

Summer Watering Schedule (1 September – 31 March)

- **Odd numbered properties** may water before 9am and after 4pm on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays
- **Even numbered properties** may water before 9am and after 4pm on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays
- **Hand watering with a single hose is permitted every day at both odd and even numbered properties, including outside approved hours and on non-scheduled days, provided the hose is held and attended while in use. Unattended hoses and sprinklers are not permitted outside approved hours or on non-scheduled days unless prior written approval has been granted**

Winter Watering Schedule (1 April – 31 August)

- **Odd numbered properties** may water at any time of day on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays
- **Even numbered properties** may water at any time of day on Wednesdays, Fridays, and Sundays
- **Hand watering with a single hose is permitted every day at both odd and even numbered properties, including outside approved hours and on non-scheduled days, provided the hose is held and attended while in use. Unattended hoses and sprinklers are not permitted outside approved hours or on non-scheduled days unless prior written approval has been granted**

1.6. Restriction Levels

Council may declare higher restriction levels by Council resolution when circumstances require more stringent water conservation measures. The restriction levels are:

- **Level 1 (Minor):** Standard watering schedule as described above
- **Level 2 (Medium):** Reduced watering methods and frequency

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- **Level 3 (High):** Watering by bucket or watering can only
- **Level 4 (Critical):** No outdoor watering permitted

The activities permitted under each restriction level are detailed in Appendix A – Watering Schedule.

1.7. Alternative Water Supplies

Residents with alternative water supplies (rainwater tanks, bores, dams) are able to use them at any time without restriction. Council recommends displaying a sign indicating a private water source is being used on the property to avoid confusion regarding compliance with water restrictions.

1.8. Exemptions

Where an exemption or amendment to the watering schedule is sought, applicants must apply for each individual property or circumstance.

Application process:

- Applications must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer using the Water Schedule Exemption Application Form
- Applications may be approved unconditionally, approved subject to conditions, or not approved
- Applications will only be considered where reasonable grounds for exemption have been presented
- Approval, if granted, will be in writing and takes effect from the date of approval

Exemption conditions:

- Exemptions for watering new turf will only be issued for a maximum of 10 days
- Applications for new turf exemptions must be submitted at least one week prior to laying the turf
- Approvals may be modified or withdrawn at any time Council sees fit
- Extensions may only be issued in special circumstances upon review and require a new application

Exemption permits:

- Approved applications will be issued with an Exemption Permit
- The permit must be displayed in a prominent position on the approved property
- The permit must be removed on expiry and returned to Council
- Displaying an expired permit or a permit on any property other than the approved property is an offence

1.9. Compliance and Offences

During a period in which the watering schedule is in effect, water from the water supply system must not be used except in accordance with the declared restriction level or as contained in any approved exemption.

Investigation and enforcement:

- A person allegedly contravening a water restriction will be investigated by an Authorised Officer
- Where an Authorised Officer determines an offence has occurred, the Authorised Officer may issue a Penalty Infringement Notice
- The fine amount (penalty units) will be in accordance with the State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014
- For subsequent offences, Council may issue a Penalty Infringement Notice and/or restrict domestic water supply and/or instigate legal action

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Appeals:

- Where a Penalty Infringement Notice is issued and the alleged offender feels aggrieved, an Application for Waiving of the Penalty Notice must be lodged in writing to the Chief Executive Officer
- The application must state the grounds and all related circumstances
- The application must be lodged within 28 days of the issue date of the Penalty Infringement Notice
- The Chief Executive Officer or delegated officer will consider the appeal on its merits and determine whether it will be upheld or dismissed

1.10. Responsibilities

Council is responsible for:

- Declaring the current restriction level and communicating changes to the community
- Processing exemption applications within 10 business days of receipt
- Investigating alleged contraventions
- Issuing Penalty Infringement Notices where offences are established
- Maintaining records of exemptions and enforcement actions
- Reviewing this policy at least every two years

Water customers are responsible for:

- Complying with the watering schedule applicable to their property
- Applying for an exemption if their circumstances require watering outside the schedule
- Displaying exemption permits in a prominent location
- Returning expired permits to Council
- Paying any Penalty Infringement Notices issued for non-compliance

5. Relevant Legislation

- Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008
- State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999
- State Penalties Enforcement Regulation 2014
- Local Government Act 2009
- Local Government Regulation 2012

6. Related Policies and Documents

Council policies:

- Nil

Other documents:

- Water Schedule Exemption Application Form
- Schedule of Fees and Charges

7. Definitions

Term	Definition
Active playing surface	A grass area for playing sports such as a tennis court, turf cricket pitch, running track, hockey pitch, bowling green, croquet green, golf green or tee, football, soccer, volleyball, netball or basketball field, and any similar area.
Alternative water	A water source other than Council's reticulated water system, including rainwater

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supply	tanks, bores, and dams.
Authorised Officer	A person appointed by Council under the Local Government Act 2009 to exercise powers and perform duties under this policy.
Council	Murweh Shire Council.
Domestic use	Potable water taken from the water supply system inside any premises for drinking, cooking, washing persons and clothes, dishwashing, cleaning, heating, and cooling a building.
Drip system	A watering system that restricts the flow of water to a nominal amount using an emitter and applies water directly to the soil around plants, incorporating a manual or automatic timer in operational condition.
Hand-held trigger or twist nozzle	A hose or pipe connected to a trigger or twist nozzle device to convey water, held in the physical possession of a person, controlling the efficient distribution of water that positively shuts off the supply of water when released.
Microspray	A watering system that creates a fine jet or mist of water and incorporates a manual or automatic timer in operational condition.
Non-active playing surface	The area of any sports ground that is not an active playing surface as defined.
Odd/even numbered property	Properties are classified based on the street number. Properties without a street number are classified as odd.
Paved area	A footpath, driveway, hard standing area, or similar having an impervious surface such as concrete, asphalt, paving stones, or tiles.
Penalty Infringement Notice	A notice issued under the State Penalties Enforcement Act 1999 for contravention of a water restriction.
Water toys/facilities	Any entertainment toy, facility, or structure which is operated by or uses non-recirculating running water from a hose or pipe as part of its use.

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8. Appendix A – Watering Schedule

Table – Activities Permitted by Restriction Level

Purpose	Level 1 (Minor)	Level 2 (Medium)	Level 3 (High)	Level 4 (Critical)
Private gardens and lawns	Watering permitted within approved hours on approved alternate days with sprinkler, hand-held trigger nozzle, or irrigation system. Hand watering with a single hose is permitted daily, including outside approved hours and on non-scheduled days.	Watering permitted within approved hours on approved alternate days with hand-held trigger nozzle or irrigation system (gardens only, no grassed areas). Watering can or bucket permitted daily (gardens only).	Watering permitted within approved hours on approved alternate days with watering can or bucket only.	No watering permitted.
Public parks, gardens, and sports grounds	Watering permitted within approved hours on approved alternate days with sprinkler, hand-held trigger nozzle, or irrigation system. Hand watering with a single hose is permitted daily, including outside approved hours and on non-scheduled days, provided the hose is held and attended while in use.	Watering permitted within approved hours on approved alternate days with hand-held trigger nozzle or irrigation system (gardens only). Non-active playing surfaces must not be watered.	Watering permitted within approved hours on approved alternate days with watering can or bucket only. Non-active playing surfaces must not be watered.	No watering permitted.
Commercial market garden and plant nursery	Watering permitted within approved hours with sprinkler, hand-held trigger nozzle, irrigation system, or watering can/bucket.	Watering permitted within approved hours with hand-held trigger nozzle, irrigation system, or watering can/bucket.	Watering permitted within approved hours with water-efficient irrigation (microspray or drip system) or watering can/bucket.	Watering permitted within approved hours with watering can or bucket only.
Swimming pools and spas	Private and public pools/spas may be filled or topped up as required.	Private and public pools/spas must only be filled or topped up to minimum operating level.	Existing pools/spas may only be topped up to minimum operating level. New pools/spas must not be filled except by exemption. Portable wading pools must not be filled.	Pools/spas must not be filled or topped up except by exemption.
Ponds,	May be filled or topped	Must only be filled	Must only be	Must not operate

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fountains, and water ornaments	up to required operating level. May operate as required.	or topped up to minimum operating level. Must not operate unless water is recirculated.	topped up if sustaining fish or bird life. Must not operate unless water is recirculated.	unless sustaining fish or bird life.
Water toys/facilities	May be used provided operated efficiently to prevent water wastage.	May be used provided operated efficiently. Water must be recirculated through equipment.	Must not be used except by exemption.	Must not be used.
Vehicles and boats	May be cleaned with hand-held trigger nozzle, high-pressure water blaster, watering can/bucket, or commercial car wash. Must be washed on grassed areas where possible.	May be cleaned with hand-held trigger nozzle, watering can/bucket, or commercial car wash (recycling 50% + of water).	May be cleaned with watering can/bucket or commercial car wash (recycling 50% + of water).	Must not be cleaned except for health/safety reasons or to prevent permanent damage.
Paved areas, driveways, house and window cleaning	Must not be cleaned except with hand-held trigger nozzle, high-pressure water blaster, or watering can/bucket.	Must not be cleaned except with watering can or bucket.	Must not be cleaned unless required for accident, fire, health/safety, construction, or emergency.	Must not be cleaned unless for health or safety reasons.
Commercial businesses	Water may be used provided used efficiently with hand-held trigger nozzle or bucket, and equipment relying on water supply is used to prevent wastage.	Water may be used provided used efficiently with hand-held trigger nozzle or bucket, and equipment is used to prevent wastage.	Water may be used provided used efficiently with hand-held trigger nozzle or bucket, and equipment is used to prevent wastage.	Water may be used provided used efficiently with hand-held trigger nozzle or bucket, and equipment is used to prevent wastage.
Other purposes	Water must not be used except by exemption (excluding domestic use, firefighting, and public health).	Water must not be used except by exemption.	Water must not be used except by exemption.	Water must not be used except by exemption.

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Version Control

Version No.	Date	Approved	Amendment
1.0	20/01/2026	CEO	Initial Adoption

Approval

Chief Executive Officer			
Date:	20/01/2026	Signature:	Bruce Scott

ATTACHMENT A

Water Schedule Exemption Application Form

Form for customers seeking an exemption or amendment to the watering schedule.

MURWEH SHIRE COUNCIL

Water Schedule Exemption Application Form

Use this form to apply for an exemption or amendment to the watering schedule under the Watering Schedule Policy. Applications must be submitted in writing to the Chief Executive Officer. Please complete all sections.

SECTION 1: APPLICANT DETAILS

Name:	
Postal Address:	
Phone:	
Email:	

SECTION 2: PROPERTY DETAILS

Property Address:	
Lot on Plan (if known):	
Water Supply Area:	☐ Charleville ☐ Augathella ☐ Morven
Property Classification:	☐ Odd numbered ☐ Even numbered ☐ No street number
Property Use:	☐ Residential ☐ Commercial ☐ Industrial

SECTION 3: TYPE OF EXEMPTION REQUESTED

☐ New turf establishment (max 10 days)	☐ New garden establishment
☐ Commercial/business operation	☐ Pool/spa filling
☐ Construction/development	☐ Health/medical reasons
☐ Other (please specify): _____	

SECTION 4: EXEMPTION PERIOD REQUESTED

Start Date:	/ /	End Date:	/ /
Watering Days:	☐ Mon ☐ Tue ☐ Wed ☐ Thu ☐ Fri ☐ Sat ☐ Sun ☐ All days		
Watering Hours:	☐ Standard hours (before 9am / after 4pm) ☐ All hours		

SECTION 5: REASON FOR EXEMPTION

Please provide detailed reasons why an exemption is required. Attach additional pages if necessary.

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SECTION 6: APPLICANT DECLARATION

I declare that the information provided in this application is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. I understand that:

- Applications may be approved unconditionally, approved subject to conditions, or not approved
- Exemptions for new turf will only be issued for a maximum of 10 days
- Approvals may be modified or withdrawn at any time Council sees fit
- If approved, the Exemption Permit must be displayed in a prominent position on the property
- The permit must be returned to Council upon expiry
- Displaying an expired permit or a permit on any property other than the approved property is an offence

Signature:		Date:	/ /
Print Name:			

OFFICE USE ONLY

Date Received:	Application No:	Received By:
/ /		

DECISION:

- ☐ Approved unconditionally
☐ Approved subject to conditions (see below)
☐ Not approved

CONDITIONS / REASONS FOR REFUSAL:

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Exemption Period:	Start Date:	End Date:
	/ /	/ /
Permit Number:	Issued Date:	Permit Returned:
	/ /	☐ Yes ☐ N/A

Approved By:		Date:
Signature:		/ /

Submit completed applications to:

Chief Executive Officer
Murweh Shire Council
Email: mail@murweh.qld.gov.au

Note: Applications for new turf exemptions must be submitted at least one week prior to laying the turf.

ATTACHMENT B

Community Information Graphics

Three social media graphics explaining the watering schedule and why it is required.

WHY WE HAVE A WATERING SCHEDULE

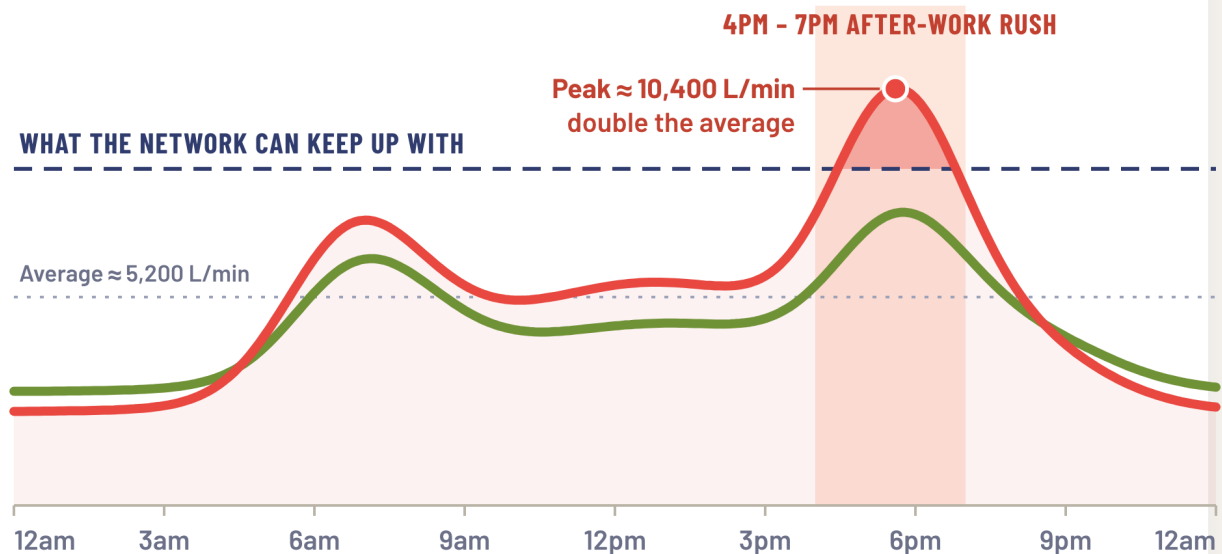
Same water. Just not all at once.

Your water allowance **isn't being reduced**. The schedule simply stops the whole town watering at the same time, so everyone keeps good pressure.

A hot summer day in Charleville: how much water the town is drawing

— Everyone waters after work

— Half the town waters each day



Indicative shape based on recorded summer demand (average $\approx 5,200$ L/min, peak about double). Green line: same watering times, half as many sprinklers on at once, with some watering moving to cooler night hours.

- 1 4-7pm:** most of town gets home and turns the sprinklers on.
- 2 The network can't keep up.** Pressure drops and reservoirs struggle to refill.
- 3 Odd/even days** halve the sprinklers running at once.

We love seeing green lawns and gardens. **Water on your days** and the whole town keeps its pressure.

murweh.qld.gov.au

THE WATERING SCHEDULE

Know your watering days.

Sprinklers and irrigation on town water in **Charleville, Augathella and Morven**, by street number.

	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
ODD e.g. 13 Smith St	 Hose only		 Hose only		 Hose only		 Hose only
EVEN e.g. 14 Smith St	 Hose only	 Hose only		 Hose only		 Hose only	

SUMMER

1 Sep – 31 Mar

Before 9am and after 4pm on your days



WINTER

1 Apr – 31 Aug

Any time of day on your days



Hand watering is OK every day, any time

One hose, held in your hand. Sprinklers and unattended hoses: your days and hours only.

No street number?

You're treated as odd.

Tank, bore or dam?

Not restricted. A sign helps neighbours know.

Laying new turf?

Apply for an exemption a week before laying.

Tip: got a timer? Set it for early morning: cooler, less evaporation, and a lighter after-work rush.

Exemption forms available from Council.

Thanks for watering on your days.

murweh.qld.gov.au

DID YOU KNOW?

What it takes to keep your taps running.

ON HOT DAYS, CHARLEVILLE ALONE USES

7-8 million litres a day



That's about **17 water towers** full...



...or **7 town swimming pools**, every day.

10,400 L/min

At the after-work peak the town draws about **double the average**. That's a 5,000 L rainwater tank emptied **every 30 seconds**.

90 km

Of water mains across the shire. About the drive from **Charleville to Morven**.

9 pump stations

Keep the mains at **6 bar (87 psi)**, over double the pressure in your car tyres.

1889

Charleville's oldest bore, **418 m deep** at the Water Tower. It's still relied on **138 years later**.

When everyone waters at once, demand outruns what the bores and pumps can deliver. Pressure drops across town and the reservoirs can't refill in time.

Spreading watering across the week keeps **water flowing for every household**, every day.

murweh.qld.gov.au