



**Melinda Pavey**  
Minister for Water, Property and Housing

## **MEDIA RELEASE**

Monday, 9 December 2019

### **LOWER HUNTER FACING LEVEL 2 WATER RESTRICTIONS AS DAM LEVELS FALL**

Minister for Water, Property and Housing, Melinda Pavey has announced that Level 2 water restrictions will commence across the Lower Hunter in early 2020, as the region's dam's fall to their lowest levels in almost 40 years.

The Bureau of Meteorology has forecast a hot summer with ongoing dry conditions. If this tracks as predicted, Level 2 water restrictions will commence on 20 January. This would be the first time Level 2 restrictions have been in place since the 1980s drought.

It comes as Hunter Water's storages drop to 57.9 per cent capacity. The last time levels fell below this total was in July 1980.

"The Lower Hunter's dams are declining at a rapid rate of about one per cent each week due to a lack of decent rainfall and high evaporation," Mrs Pavey said.

While there is a possibility the region could receive rainfall between now and then, we are preparing early to provide Hunter Water customers with certainty, we are conscious of Christmas and the school holidays fast approaching.

Under Level 2 water restrictions, outdoor watering is limited to 15 minutes every second day, vehicles and buildings can only be washed with a bucket and showers are limited to four minutes.

Hunter Water's Executive Drought Lead Darren Cleary said he was hopeful Level 2 water restrictions would build on the significant savings already made by the community.

"Since the start of Level 1 water restrictions, our community has used 17 per cent less water than what we expected, given the weather conditions – the average water use of approximately 62,000 households over the same period," Mr Cleary said.

"We've been working closely with our large business customers who use more than 10 million litres of water a year to develop Water Efficiency Management Plans. This will soon be expanded to our smaller business customers as they start preparing their own plans.

"Thank you to everyone in our community for playing their part to save water, because your efforts are helping make a difference."

For more information on Level 2 water restrictions visit, [www.hunterwater.com.au/restrictions](http://www.hunterwater.com.au/restrictions)