

LOW SUPPLY ALERT



Frequently Asked Questions

Lake Awoonga Water Supply

What is the Drought Management Plan (DMP)?

The primary goal of GAWB's Drought Management Plan (DMP) is to ensure continued water supply to our customers during prolonged drought conditions. GAWB's DMP outlines the operational, commercial and environmental triggers and actions required for the implementation of a Low Supply Alert and any future Supply Restrictions.

What are the key factors influencing the DMP?

Awoonga Dam is the Gladstone region's primary water source for both major industrial operations and the broader community. GAWB considers a variety of factors when before activating the plan. These include public health, economic impact, availability and future requirements.

What is water from Lake Awoonga used for?

Approximately 80% of the water supplied by GAWB is high quality untreated (raw) water supplied to industrial users, including Callide power stations near Biloela.

Drinking water comprises approximately 20% of our total supply. Most of the drinking water is supplied to Gladstone Regional Council and on-supplied via its reticulations systems, primarily for domestic use.

Where does Lake Awoonga receive its inflows from?

GAWB has gauging stations located in the Boyne Valley, including Diglum Creek, Nagoorin and Milton Station.

Does GAWB employ drought pricing like some water providers in other regions?

No. GAWB does not employ drought pricing mechanisms. Bulk water pricing for GAWB's customers is monitored by the Queensland Competition Authority.

What is the rainfall outlook into Lake Awoonga for the remainder of 2021?

GAWB regularly monitors weather patterns and rainfall predictions in the Gladstone region. Gladstone has experienced below average rainfall for the last three years and we expect that pattern to remain unchanged in the short term.

What is 'dead storage'?

Dead storage is the water remaining in Lake Awoonga that cannot be accessed without the use of temporary pumps or other additional extraction methods. This is around 8 per cent of the total supply held in the dam. Capacity at Lake Awoonga currently sits at around 55%.

Low Supply Alert Declaration

What triggers a Low Supply Alert Declaration?

The Low Supply Alert trigger occurs when our models indicate Awoonga Dam is 5 years (60 months) away from being unable to supply water to its customers.

How is a Low Supply Alert different to Supply Restrictions?

A Low Supply Alert is declared before stricter Supply Restrictions are needed. It does not impose any supply restrictions on our customers in terms of their water consumption. It is an opportunity for customers to make proactive changes and adopt voluntary water saving strategies.

What happens after a Low Supply Alert is issued?

A Low Supply Alert is declared approximately one year (12 months) before possible Level One Supply Restrictions are needed. It does not impose any supply restrictions on our customers in terms of their water consumption. It is an opportunity for customers to make proactive changes early.

When was the last time GAWB had to issue a Low Supply Alert?

GAWB last issued a Low Supply Alert in 2007.

Supply Restrictions

What are GAWB's Supply Restrictions?

Every customer has different needs, and we work hard to tailor Supply Restrictions accordingly. If Level One Supply Restrictions need to be imposed, GAWB will advise customers of any restrictions that may apply to them.

When are Supply Restrictions likely to come into effect?

Level One Supply Restrictions are likely to come into effect approximately one year (12 months) from the time the Low Supply Alert Declaration is issued, and dam capacity has not increased.

Will Supply Restrictions be placed on Gladstone residents?

We do not have the authority to place Supply Restrictions on residential water users. This is the responsibility of Gladstone Regional Council. If future Supply Restrictions are declared by GAWB, it will be GRC who decides makes that decision. We are committed to working with GRC to ensure accurate and timely information is provided to residents.

What Demand Reduction Strategies is GAWB currently considering?

We are working with our customers and key stakeholders to identify additional reduction strategies that could assist GAWB with delaying the need for restrictions. Every customer is different, meaning every response will be different.

Our Customers

What are industrial customers doing to help limit water usage?

Every customer is different. A Low Supply Alert Declaration is an opportunity for our customers to adopt voluntary reduction strategies, and we are working with them to identify opportunities.

Our DMP recognises different customer needs and tailors' restrictions accordingly. If Level One Supply Restrictions are needed in the future, GAWB will advise customers of any restrictions that may apply to them.

Public Safety and Recreational Users

Will GAWB restrict access to recreational users as dam capacity reduces?

Access will not be restricted at this stage. We are working with Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) to better understand any new restrictions or safety requirements that must be implemented as dam capacity falls. GAWB encourages all recreational users to exercise extra caution.



Alternative Supply Options

Is Lake Awoonga the only domestic water source for Gladstone?

Lake Awoonga is the only domestic water source managed and operated by Gladstone Area Water Board.

Gladstone Regional Council (GRC) also operates the Miriam Vale, Bororen and Agnes Water/1770 water supply schemes for domestic customers. GAWB has no accountability for these schemes.

What about Rookwood Weir and the Gladstone to Fitzroy Pipeline Project?

The government is looking at water security in Central Queensland. This includes considering the construction of the Gladstone to Fitzroy Pipeline.

Are any contingency supplies available if Lake Awoonga continues to be depleted?

The government is looking at water security in Central Queensland. This includes considering the construction of the Gladstone to Fitzroy Pipeline.

Could any GAWB customers switch to alternative water sources?

Lake Awoonga is the primary water source for all major industrial customers and most domestic users in the Gladstone region. As the region's only bulk water supplier, we have the necessary infrastructure in place to ensure safe, reliable water supply for our customers.