



Nursery & Garden Industry  
Queensland

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOCUS ON DAMS**

With some coastal dams now overflowing the Nursery & Garden Industry Queensland (NGIQ) believes the path to future water supplies for the South East has now been made painfully clear.

NGIQ President Bill Watson says that it should now be clear to the State Government that, on top of all the planning currently underway there now has to be a serious focus on establishing a new dam near the coast.

“The Government’s way forward seems to make sense, but we’d like to see Government now begin to develop a realistic approach to the siting of a major dam to supply the area.”

Mr. Watson says while the Government on the one hand is recognizing the future growth issues for South East Queensland with plans for major road networks in Brisbane, they’re not doing enough to secure water.

“Long- term there is the need for more dams. It must be remembered that the last major dam project undertaken in South East Queensland was the construction of the Wivenhoe Dam. Primarily this project was completed not for the provision of water to the South East, but as part of overall flood mitigation works following the devastating 1974 floods.”

Mr. Watson says there has been no realistic infrastructure planning for dam expansion in the South East by successive Governments for more than past 25 years.

“On a per capita basis water storage in South East Queensland has fallen 40% since Wivenhoe Dam was built in mid 1980’s. By 2025 water storage capacity will fall per person, even allowing for the construction of the Cedar Grove Weir, Wyaralong Dam and the addition of the Ewen Maddock Dam to water supply resources.”

“While that is the only way forward, we also believe that there needs to be a re-think on some of the existing water restrictions.”

Mr. Watson says he’s also pleased that South East Queensland Water and key councils are talking with the industry in an attempt to refine some of the existing and looming restrictions.

“Many gardeners are also amazed that they cannot use their water saving sprinkler systems under current restrictions. To have people who have such systems using wasteful hand held hosing is simply a nonsense and a waste of water.”

Mr. Watson says using a trigger hose on a small suburban lawn and average size garden beds takes about an hour, and is ineffective at deep root watering, therefore it has to be done more often.

The conservative flow of water through a trigger hose is about 20- 30 litres per minute, therefore an hours watering consumes 1,200-1,800 litres. To hand hose an average garden 3 times a week for one hour consumes 3,600 litres – to 5,400 litres of water a week per household.

“Pop-Up sprinklers, even the most thirsty, use approximately 12.9 litres per minute, with the average yard in South East Queensland requiring 30 minutes of sprinkler watering 3 times per week. Total consumption therefore for a weeks watering would be 1,161 litres of water with such a system. A water saving of between 2,439 litres-4,239 litres per household per week.”

Also sprinkler systems can be set to timers in the middle of the night to ensure maximum soil penetration without the effects of evaporation.

Water sensors can also be added to such systems to ensure they do not turn on if rain has fallen.

“We would suggest to the Minister and Premier that he brings together all interested parties so that the many concepts that have been advanced can be explored. The object would be two fold, firstly to begin a program to ensure there is a while of community approach to water saving, and secondly to finalise long term solutions.”

Mr. Watson says issues such as replacing old toilet systems with water saving dual flush systems, the use of water tanks, better usage of grey water are all part of the short term solution.

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