

Temporary Usage Ban Non Household FAQs

Summer 2025



YorkshireWater

General

When will the restrictions come into effect?

The temporary restrictions will come into place from 11th July 2025 for all Yorkshire Water customers.

How will I know if I am affected by the restrictions?

If you receive your clean water services from us, then you are affected by the restrictions.

As a business, you'll be allowed to use a hosepipe if this is directly related to the use of water for your commercial purposes. There are restrictions on business customers using a hosepipe if not for those essential needs – so using a hosepipe to clean a path outside your business property, for example, would be covered by the restrictions. There are more specific examples in the questions below and further information on our website.

At what point, if any, will the water resources situation affect businesses and commercial use?

We're continually monitoring the situation. We're not planning to impose further water use restrictions at the moment. Clearly, if the dry weather continues for a prolonged period, we may reach the point where further restrictions could be required. We would need a statutory order to put this in place. This is set out in our statutory drought plan.

I have a private supply, e.g. borehole, can I still use a hosepipe?

Yes.

What if I need to use a hosepipe for my business?

You can use hosepipes and sprinklers where it is directly related to your day-to-day business excluding the watering of gardens. We would however encourage the use of low water usage technology.

What if I use a customer's hosepipe for my business, i.e. to clean wheelie bins, water a customer's flowers or valet their car?

You can use customers' hosepipes and sprinklers where it is directly related to your day-to-day business excluding the watering of domestic gardens. We would however encourage the use of low water usage technology, such as a low water use pressure washer wherever possible.



General

I have a standpipe usage licence – does this affect filling mobile sources up and metering?

Please only use standpipes where absolutely necessary. You can only use specific hydrants at strategic points according to your licence. You must use the hydrants you have been given permission to use to reduce the effect of pressure on the network. Make sure your licence is up-to-date and ensure fittings are working properly and not wasting water.

I am developing/extending my property can I continue to use my hosepipe for this?

You can use a hosepipe for activities directly associated with your building work, e.g. mixing cement, but not for cleaning paths and roads unless for health and safety purposes. You can continue to water newly laid turf (until its 28 days old) with a hosepipe.

Can I carry out fire sprinkler testing and flow testing of fire hydrants?

Yes, this activity isn't prohibited by the temporary use restrictions. However, where possible we would ask that the testing of these systems is delayed until the restrictions have been lifted.



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Site-Specific Arrangement and Sensitive Customers

Do the restrictions impact a hospital?

No, hospitals are exempt from the restrictions. If certain activities, like maintaining public gardens, can be done using alternative methods – such as watering cans or more water-efficient products – then these practices are encouraged and permitted to continue during the temporary restrictions.

Do the restrictions impact a prison?

No, prisons are exempt from the restrictions.

I operate a care home, can I still use a hosepipe for a communal garden?

Under the restrictions, you can't use a hosepipe to water your communal garden. Instead, try using a watering can or consider alternatives such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions, so you can keep your garden thriving without any worries.

Do the restrictions cover schools and universities?

Not all activities are covered by the temporary usage restrictions, for example, cleaning the windows of non-domestic buildings and washing pathways for health and safety reasons.

Under the restrictions, you can't use a hosepipe to water your communal garden. Instead, try using a watering can or consider alternatives such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions, so you can keep your garden thriving without any worries. However, all water users are urged to conserve water whenever they can.



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Garden Centres, Parks & Flowers

I own a garden centre, how am I affected?

If you're growing these flowers to sell or for commercial use, then you can continue to water these with a hosepipe. We would, however, encourage the use of a watering can or other water efficient devices such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the ban.

If you have a flowerbed on your premises which isn't for sale, then you cannot use a hosepipe for this.

Please note, filling displayed ornamental fountains with a hosepipe is also prohibited unless this is necessary to supply sufficient oxygen to the water in a pond to keep fish healthy.

We have an ornamental fountain/water feature which we operate in public parks and town centres. Are these exempt?

You cannot fill or maintain an ornamental fountain/water feature with a hosepipe while the temporary usage restrictions are in place.

I've just planted some ornamental plants for a client; can I use a hosepipe/sprinkler to water these?

You have up to 28 days from when these are planted to use a hosepipe or sprinkler, after that you'd need to use an alternative method, such as a watering can or products such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions, so you can keep your flowers thriving without any worries.

I have to maintain planters containing trees on the side of a highway – can I use a hosepipe for this?

Under the temporary usage restrictions, you can't use a hosepipe for this, you'd have to use an alternative such as a watering can or products such as drip or trickle irrigation systems. These systems come with pressure-reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the restrictions.



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Washing of Vehicles and Buildings

Which vehicles CAN be washed with a hosepipe during the temporary usage restrictions?

While we'd prefer everyone to use a low water usage apparatus during the restrictions, such as a low water use pressure washer, there are some vehicles which can still be washed with a hosepipe. These are:

- Public bus
- Any vehicles covered by an organisations "Goods Vehicle Operator's License"
- Military vehicles
- Snow ploughs and gritters
- Emergency service vehicles (including those used by gas, electricity, water and telephone companies)
- Hearses and accompanying funeral cars
- Recovery vehicles (only if they're used exclusively for that purpose)
- Tractors and agricultural vehicles
- Mobile exhibition vehicles
- Catering vehicles
- Mobile shops
- Mobile medical screening vehicles
- Any vehicle of over 3.5 tonnes gross plated weight or (where there is no plated weight) an unladen weight of more than 1,525kg to transport goods for hire or reward or in connection with a trade or business

Which vehicles CAN'T be washed with a hosepipe during the temporary usage restrictions?

- Private car
- Taxi
- Limousine
- Wedding Car
- Private hire minibus
- Private hire coach
- Any other vehicle including those used in the course of running a business (e.g. white van)

Washing of Vehicles and Buildings

I own a taxi/private hire vehicle, can I use a hosepipe to keep this clean?

You wouldn't be able to use your hosepipe for this; you'd need to find an alternative way to keep the vehicle clean such as using a bucket and sponge.

I run a wedding car business and need to keep these clean for someone's big day. Can I use a hosepipe to do this?

You wouldn't be able to use your hosepipe for this; you'd need to find an alternative way to keep the cars clean such as using a bucket and sponge.

We're planning a charity car wash – and will be using pressure washers. Are we exempt?

No, but you can hold a charity car wash as long as you use buckets and sponges and not hosepipes or pressure washers.

I own a limousine company and need to use a hosepipe to keep these clean. Am I exempt?

Limousines are not exempt. They'd need to be washed by another method, either with a bucket and sponge or low water usage apparatus. We're not saying you can't use water; we just want people to use less wasteful methods.

We are a window cleaning business – how are we affected?

As a commercial business you are exempt from the restrictions.

Can I use a hosepipe to clean graffiti from a building?

Where the graffiti is a hate crime, insulting or offensive a hosepipe can be used to clean this.

Why are councils still cleaning windows, buildings and washing public vehicles, etc.?

Not all activities are covered by the temporary usage restrictions, e.g. cleaning the windows of non-domestic buildings or washing public service vehicles. However, ALL water users are urged to conserve water whenever they can, and we have given water-saving advice to councils and other commercial customers. Should the situation deteriorate, consideration would be given to applying for powers to restrict other activities.

Washing of Vehicles and Buildings

I manage a local car dealership. Can we still use the jet wash to wash customers' cars? We normally valet them before they go out.

Hosepipes can be used but only where the vehicles are for sale or where you offer a car wash/valeting service that customers have paid for specifically either as a single service or included in a service package. We would, however, ask that you look for ways to use your water as efficiently as possible, like using a low volume pressure washer. Hosepipes use hundreds of litres of water an hour, that's more than a family of four use in a day.

The use of a hosepipe to clean customer-owned vehicles as a complimentary or free service would not be permitted. You can still use water in a bucket, low water-use jet washer or waterless car washing products that are now available. A bucket and sponge may only use 10 litres. We're not saying you can't use water; we just want people to use less wasteful methods.

Can car jet washes, car washes and car valeting businesses use a hosepipe?

Commercial car washes are not affected by the temporary usage restrictions.

I need to use a hosepipe to wash out an engine, can I do this?

Yes, this is exempt from the restrictions.



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Sports Grounds

Are golf clubs or sports grounds, etc. affected by the temporary usage restrictions?

Where there is a health and safety requirement to water an area of sports ground this is permitted but only for the active playing area. We would still encourage other means of watering that are not as water demanding as hosepipes and sprinklers.



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Local Authorities

Can a council park use their water play area during the temporary usage ban?

The park splash area is exempt as it's not a domestic pool or domestic recreational area, but we'd clearly welcome any measures the council could take to reduce water wastage during the ban.

We have an ornamental fountain/water feature which we operate in public parks and town centres. Are these exempt?

You cannot fill or maintain an ornamental fountain/water feature with a hosepipe while the ban is in place.

We're a council and need hosepipes or sprinklers to water hanging baskets and floral displays in our town centre locations or parks.

During the period of the ban, hosepipes and sprinklers cannot be used for watering floral beds or displays or hanging baskets in public locations. We welcome every organisation's support to use water as efficiently as they can, particularly when it comes to carrying out tasks which are part of regular maintenance activities.

In terms of alternatives to hosepipes and sprinklers, there are products such as drip or trickle irrigation systems, fitted with pressure reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the ban.

We appreciate that local authorities do take their own role in using water as carefully as possible seriously and if activities, such as public garden maintenance or watering town centre floral displays, can be done using alternative means, such as using watering cans, or alternative more water efficient products, then this is welcomed and is allowed to continue during this period of temporary restrictions. Reducing the amount of watering which is routinely undertaken will also be hugely helpful.

I have to maintain planters containing trees on the side of a highway – can I use a hosepipe for this?

Under the ban, you can't use a hosepipe for this, you'd have to use an alternative such as a watering can or products such as drip or trickle irrigation systems, fitted with pressure reducing valves and timers, making them more water-efficient. Plus, they're not affected by the ban.

Water Efficiency and Leakage

I want to make sure I'm prepared for a temporary usage ban in the future. Can you help me with my on-site storage?

This isn't a service Yorkshire Water provides. Business continuity planning and on-site storage is the responsibility of customers. Your retailer might be able to assist with these services, so please check with them.

I've got a leak on my site. Can you come and fix it?

Your retailer may be able to help with this, or you may need to appoint a contractor to do this for you. This isn't something that Yorkshire Water would help you with if the leak is on your site.

Will this have any impact my commercial water bill?

You need to contact your retailer to discuss any implications the ban may have on your bill. Since April 2017 all business customers in England are served by licensed retail providers. You will be able to find details of who your retailer is on your water or sewerage bill, if you're unsure of who this is we can tell you.

What can I do to reduce my consumption? Is there anything I can do to help?

The dry and warm weather means we're seeing a massive increase in water consumption across the region. Simple ways you can help include:

- Check for leaks and repair any dripping taps or loos used in the workplace
- Encourage employees to look at ways to use less water in the workplace and ask them to turn off hosepipes, report any leaks and identify any processes that could be wasting water
- Employee suggestion schemes can help to identify water saving ideas which could save the business money
- If your business has any grassed areas, please avoid using sprinklers. Lawns will soon green up again once it rains
- Take a look at our water saving tips for business customers
<https://www.yorkshirewater.com/business/water-efficiency/>

Pools with religious significance

We operate a pool for religious ceremonies, can I still fill this?

Yes, a hosepipe can be used for pools within places of worship or community pools that are used as part of a religious ceremony.

Allotments

I have an allotment, can I still water my crops with a hosepipe?

Yes, a hosepipe can be used to water food crops at domestic premises or private allotments, where this cannot be reasonably done via a watering can.