



Media Statement

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Emergency water supply network to support farmers through southern dry

A strategic network of government managed emergency water supplies is ready to support southern farmers to manage the impact of dry conditions on water for livestock and firefighting.

Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) Manager Rural Water Planning, Tracy Calvert said there are more than 120 Strategic Community Water Supplies throughout the dryland regions that farmers can access for emergency livestock water.

“Over the growing season DWER regularly tracks the rainfall at priority sites to determine where there may be issues with livestock drinking water and the need for farmers to cart water from off farm supplies,” Ms Calvert said.

“Despite above-to-well above average late winter and spring rainfall in many areas along the South Coast helping ease the effects of dry winter conditions, sites from Nornalup east towards Esperance have recorded below to well below average rainfall for the year.

“This low rainfall has resulted in on-farm water shortages with vulnerable Shires including Jerramungup, Ravensthorpe, Lake Grace and parts of the Kent and Dumbleyung.”

The department has just finished a review of emergency water supplies, and is monitoring the status of the supplies and the number of farmers accessing them.

“DWER is maintaining close contact with the Shires, Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and Landcare groups to monitor farm management and water issues,” Ms Calvert said.

“Some farmers are already accessing emergency water in Jerramungup where there are seven water supplies available to use.

“We expect the number of farmers carting in this area to increase over the summer and supplies at this stage are at a good level to meet this demand.”

Through the Community Water Supply Planning program DWER continues its work to increase the number and capacity of these supplies for emergency purposes including firefighting, emergency livestock water and townscape irrigation.

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