



Water Map Frequently Asked Questions

The City of Cape Town's water map provides information on household water use, treated effluent collection points and water pressure management zones.

The Water Map shows the following:

- Water use per household (free-standing houses only; not cluster housing, flats or other land uses).
- Collection points for treated effluent (recycled wastewater) for industry and construction.
- [Apply for supply of treated effluent](#)
- Water distribution zones, used to supply water and [manage water pressure](#).

Household water use limits are based on water level restrictions applicable at the time of water meter readings;

LEVEL	EFFECTIVE DATE	INDIVIDUAL LIMIT	HOUSEHOLD LIMIT*
Level 5	From 3 September 2017	87 litres pp/day	10 500
Level 6	From 1 January 2018	87 litres pp/day	10 500
Level 6b	From 1 February 2018	50 litres pp/day	6000

*Based on a household of four people.

Why do some houses use more water than others?

Houses with one or two occupants are expected to use less water than those with a higher number of occupants.

Some households have valid reasons for higher than average usage. These include:

- Backyard dwellers or occupants in "granny flats"
- High number of occupants or guests staying in the house
- Operating a home business or B&B on the property
- Recently completed building work
- Water leaks that the occupants are unaware of (this happens frequently)

However, in other cases, the occupants are either not doing enough to save water, or may be unaware of an underground water leak, a leaking toilet, a dripping expansion valve or another problem.

What must I do if my household uses more than 87 litres per person per day?

Reduce your water use immediately (if you have not done so already).

Start doing these basic things:

1. Check for leaks and fix them immediately
2. Capture all basin, bath and shower water for toilet flushing

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3. Fit your taps with aerators and your shower with a low-flow showerhead
4. Stop flushing your toilet as regularly; if it's yellow, let it mellow

[Find out how to save water in the home](#)

[Download our water saving resources for your home and office](#)

What can I do about households in my neighbourhood that use more than 87 litres per person per day?

We have chosen not to include red dots to identify those houses using more than the 10 500 litres per month. This is because we do not want residents to behave aggressively and name and shame their neighbours on social media.

During this crisis we all need to work together, not alienate each other.

High users are often unaware of their usage, but willing to change their behaviour once approached. In many cases, high water users have become Cape Town's best water champions once they have become aware of their usage levels.

Approach your neighbour politely, leave a note on their door or send a respectful email or text message. You can also raise this with neighbourhood groups in your area in order to collectively manage water usage in your area.

Remember that usage higher than 10 500 litres per month does not necessarily indicate water abuse. There are many legitimate reasons for this, as mentioned above.

Remember:

- Accurate water usage can take up to two months to show up on the map, so the problem could be resolved during that time.
- At this stage, we are unable to monitor water usage for group housing or properties with an estimated water reading. This will be added in time.
- In rare cases, there may be an error in the water usage information, the property may have the incorrect tariff land-use code or the usage information could be linked to the incorrect property on the map.

Why are estimated usage readings used for some properties?

We aim to read all water meters once a month. However, there are more than 600 000 water meters in Cape Town and some (approximately 12%) are not read every month for a variety of reasons, but usually because the person tasked with reading the water meter cannot find the meter or is unable to access it.

Remember: Water meter readers need to move quickly through each suburb in order to read a large number of meters.

Estimated water usage is shown as a grey dot on the map.

Can I submit my own meter reading?

Whilst the City is responsible for reading all meters, there are a number of things residents can do to assist:

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- Make sure that your meter is visible, accessible and not obstructed by vegetation, building rubble or sands
- If your meter is inside your property you can log a [Service Request](#) to have it relocated so it can be read.
- If your meter is often estimated, you could submit your meter reading yourself, using e-Services. You can [register for e-Services](#), then activate the municipal accounts service and enter your monthly water meter readings.

If you're submitting your own meter reading, remember that the numbers in black on your water meter represents kilolitres and the numbers in red represent litres. As you are charged per kilolitre, you only need to supply the numbers in black.

How are the monthly usage indicators calculated?

Approximately 30 000 water meters are read every day throughout Cape Town. They are read once a month and an average daily usage is calculated for the period that has elapsed since the last reading.

The period between two meter readings will differ in different areas, depending on the date the reading is scheduled. If the meter is not read, the City's computer system estimates a reading based on previous use.

An average daily consumption is extracted for all single residential properties, for each month, and the values are converted to kilolitres for an "average month" (365 days ÷ 12 months).

Remember: The usage will not necessarily agree with your water bill. Even though your water bill is calculated on the same water meter reading or estimated reading, it is based on a billing period that may be longer or shorter than an "average month".

Why does the map not show the most up-to-date information?

We aim to update the map with data of the previous month, by the third week of the following month. However, data collection is time consuming and certain time lags are simply unavoidable. Before we can update the information on the map, we need to wait for the end of the month to allow time for the billing process to occur and any corrections to be made. Then we process the data and link it to the map – all of which can take time.

Why are water usage indicators "missing" for some properties?

There are several reasons why information may be "missing" for some properties:

- Water use is only provided for single residential properties and not group housing, flats, commercial, industrial properties or other land-uses.
- Water use for properties using more than 10 500 litres per month or those based on estimated readings are not shown in phase one.
- Properties consisting of multiple erven will only have usage information linked to one property.
- Usage will also be missing for properties where there is a problem with the data, although this is relatively rare. Some single residential properties may have the incorrect land-use tariff category assigned to them or we may have been unable to assign the information to the correct property on the map.

What if I disagree with my water usage?

Remember, the usage indicated on the map may include water use from up to two months previously and therefore will differ from what is indicated on your municipal account.

The information shown on the Water map is NOT used for billing purposes.

If you still disagree, you may send an email to water.map@capetown.gov.za including your account number, your address, your erf number (number shown on your property on the map) and copies/photographs of your **last three water bills**. We will attempt to investigate all reported errors, but please understand that in the context of this crisis, we may not always have resources to look into every single reported error. In some cases, the investigation may need to be referred to other relevant departments to be resolved.

Are there errors in the data?

Cape Town usage data is fairly accurate, however, no billing system is 100% correct. Cape Town is a large city with more than 600 000 properties and even a small error rate will result in what may appear to be a large number of errors, e.g. a 1% error rate will translate to 6 000 errors.

To date, we have investigated confirmed errors. If you are one of the relatively small number of properties with incorrect billing, we apologise in advance. Please bear with us. We trust that you will understand that we are providing greater transparency in water usage, which is especially necessary to avoid Day Zero – even though the data may contain a small number of errors. We applaud every individual whose water consumption is within limits, even if it is not displayed on the map.

If you think there is an error in the water use shown for your household, please send an email to water.map@capetown.gov.za including your account number, your address, your erf number (number shown on your property on the map) and copies/photographs of your last three water bills. We will attempt to investigate all reported errors, but please understand that in the context of this crisis, we may not always have resources to look into every single reported error.

What should I do if I wish to make a suggestion, report a technical problem or have a complaint or objection?

You may send an email to water.map@capetown.gov.za.