



Mutual Heights

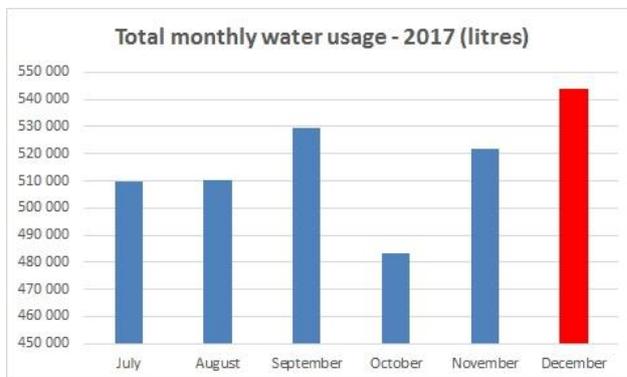
News from your Trustees

Edition 42: 20 January 2018

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Water management

First, let me address the most important issue: **the consumption and management of water**. After a great start (September to October last year) the consumption of water is now higher than it has ever been since the internet-connected meters were installed, and measurement data became available. Perhaps you have seen the posters in the lifts and on the front page of [the web site](#):



Water usage in the building has increased significantly in December
We must REDUCE our water consumption
EVERY DROP COUNTS

At the time of writing, the City management expects DAY ZERO to arrive on 21st April. That means we have less than **90 days left before we can expect the taps to be turned off**. When that happens, residents in the City will have to collect potable drinking water – no more than 25 litres per day – from water collection points. The city will not be providing containers – we must obtain our own. Water is very heavy to carry; those who can carry will need to help those who can't. The maximum allowed - 25 litres – weighs about 25 kilos.

In the meantime, from the 1st of February the Level 6b restrictions will reduce the present 87 litre daily limit to 50 litres per day, and the Level 6b tariffs are dramatically increased.

The next graph shows you the dramatically increasing cost of water next month according to the new City tariffs. Typical Mutual Heights usage is 3,000 litres, which will cost a total of

R438

If you use as much as our worst offender (almost 15,000 litres in December), it will cost you

R9,548

Owners: you have real-time water monitoring available, and you are encouraged to pass these costs on to tenants and visitors in order to force economy of use.

Tenants and visitors: Notwithstanding any arrangements with your landlord, or host, please be aware that the building management will respond promptly to deal with any excessive use of water.

You have been warned!



So, what are your Trustees doing about this?

We will be applying financial penalties in line with the City rules

The new City tariffs are well publicised and Trustees have asked the office to prepare water bills for FEBRUARY to be in line with these tariffs, that will be paid by regular residential users in the City area. The charges will be applied to the levy accounts. Note that the funds raised in this way will contribute to the additional steps that we are taking, detailed below.

We are installing water storage

Our notional daily allowance after Day Zero (25 litres for each of 177 sections) amounts to almost 5000 litres. We have decided to install 10,000 litres of storage capacity, that could be used to dispense the daily allowance (by agreement with the city), or could be used to harvest ground water from the sumps in the basement of the building; in the latter case, the water would not be drinkable but it could be used for other purposes.

Details will be circulated as soon as we have established what is (and is not) possible to do.

We have arranged for you to see your consumption in real time

AMI, who are providing the water measurement services associated with the new meters, have an App for your smart phone that lets you see your consumption on an hourly, daily, weekly or monthly basis. You can download the App from

Android: <https://play.google.com/store/apps/details?id=dk.saseco.kamstrup>

iPhone: <https://itunes.apple.com/de/app/ebutler-kamstrup/id980496106?l=en&mt=8>

or simply search in the App Store for "eButler". Make sure to install the English version of the App !

You will be able to see instructions for using the App (currently being prepared) here:

<https://www.mutualheights.info/MHM/miWaterReadings.php>

That's what Trustees and the management team are doing. Now, what must YOU do?

If you live in the building it's simple - you must CONTROL your use of water.

All owners who are NOT resident must make arrangements to ensure that long-term tenants or short-term visitors water usage is managed within the limits. There will be no concessions because of "difficulties managing" rentals - owners remain ultimately responsible at all times.

Attached to this newsletter is an excellent summary from the WWF – please take 10 minutes to read it carefully. It provides the best possible information that is available

Short-stay visitors and the new concierge

As the height of the summer visitor season passes, day-by-day, there have been no reported incidents relating to the increased volume of short-stay visitors. If you do have a report, please let us know without delay.

One step towards the smooth running of short stays is our new concierge, Jose Varta. He is employed by the Body Corporate as the point of 'first contact', and he will have access to the information about short stay visitors (from the web site. Hence, if you (or your agents) use the web site to load the basic data about your visitors and when they are coming, they can be welcomed; if you (or your agents) do not, then the visitors will have to spend time at the entrance, identifying themselves, answering questions, and filling in forms.



If visitors are NOT registered, there will be penalties (yet to be decided).

Remember that our [Conduct Rules](#), and South African Law, requires that owners advise the managing agents of ALL the people they allow to occupy their sections when they, the owners, are not there. The web site makes that easy to do. You need an ID ("Entity tag") and password ("Entity access code") to access the interactive facilities of the web site. Please [contact us](#) if you have not received the "Welcome" email that provides you those details (sent to all owners last year). There is a [six-minute video](#) on the web site showing how registration can be done.

Dealing with disturbances

Although there have been no reported incidents recently, residents are reminded that if they are disturbed, or if there is any kind of incident that breaches our conduct rules, then they are entitled by South African law to record by audio or video, provided that they are party to the exchange. Hence, if (for example) you are disturbed at night, then you only have to step out and ask for a noise to be stopped, and you can record. If we are to be able to deal with incidents pro-actively then we need the evidence. Please bear this in mind, but under no circumstances should you put yourself in danger. The telephone number for security at the main entrance – **021 465 2528** – is manned 24/7. If you call that number and there is no reply, then please note the exact time and [report it](#) at the earliest opportunity. Why not make sure that number is in your contact list right now?

Remedial works

For several years, "Damp proofing" and "Remedial works" have featured in virtually every newsletter. The project is now essentially complete: there is just window sealing to be done (principally on the Longmarket Street elevation) and then the job is done.

Trustees are considering whether it is worth marking, or celebrating this milestone in some way. It is, after all, more than TEN YEARS since this all began. The Body Corporate communicated concern about damp ingress on 1st November 2007, and Old Mutual first denied liability on 15th May, 2008. Any ideas about what we might do, please [contact us](#).

We are indebted to Dave Evans and SkyRiders, who have travelled the whole journey with us, and with whom (so far as I know) we have never had a single argument.

Smart metering for electricity

You will know that the new water meters are proving immensely beneficial in dealing with the water crisis. Trustees have decided to undertake the same project for the electricity metering: this will be funded by a fixed charge on each section, comprising a "deposit" that will be repaid on sale and transfer of a section. There will be a small additional charge on your levy statements spreading the deposit over six months.

The benefits of this project include reliability (there are many queries raised about electricity readings, and the meters do fail), access to the information (using the same App as provided for the water metering), better recovery of costs, and an option to go "pre-paid" – important if you are renting your section out. More information about this in due course.

Lift project

The smart metering for electricity is a small project, and the damp works are more or less complete, so can we relax? No. Anyone living in or using the building knows that the lifts are increasingly unreliable and we need to take action. This does not have to be done precipitously, but whether we go for re-furbishing or replacement the cost per-lift will be of the order of R1m, and this work will have to be done.

Trustees have agreed to seek professional advice, and develop a plan to deal with all the lifts as needed. As a result, a reserve needs to be built up to deal with the cost and therefore there will be increases in the levy again this year. More details when the budget is done, if you have something to say about this then please plan on coming to the AGM which will be towards the end of June.

Energy audit

It is now some time since we had electricity cuts, but the cost of electricity continues to rise and we have agreed to organise a professional audit of electricity usage. This will include the cost of electricity for the lifts, for the ventilation systems, and for lighting. Based on what we learn, the budget for the year (or for next year) will be reviewed and adjusted.

Store rooms available

Finally, following the disposal by Old Mutual of all the sections remaining within their ownership, and a review of the common areas, it is possible to offer a small number of new store rooms for rental. This will be done by formalised submission of offers; more information about this will also be made available soon.

With warm regards,
on behalf of the Trustees,



Andy Bytheway,
Chairman of the Trustees,
Mutual Heights,
Cape Town.

NOTE: Our new web site has a different address ending in **`.info`**;
for now, email communication is still with **'... .net'**

<http://www.mutualheights.info>
info@mutualheights.net

Check out "Mutual Building" on Wikipedia:
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mutual_Building

WWF'S WEDNESDAY WATER FILE

17 January 2018

IT'S TIME TO PREPARE FOR DAY ZERO

For the last few months, Capetonians have been talking about Day Zero, the day when the city's taps are expected to run dry but what does this really mean? In the first of a regular weekly update, WWF South Africa will be publishing a Wednesday Water File to help households and businesses in the Western Cape to prepare for life beyond Day Zero when we will have access to very little water.

1. When is Day Zero likely to happen?

At present, Day Zero is calculated to be about three months away on 21 April. This day is calculated based on knowing how much water is in the big 6 dams that feed Cape Town and the Western Cape Water Supply System, and knowing how much water is being used by the city's residents, by agriculture and what is evaporating out of the dam. Day Zero is a worst-case scenario but it has been inching closer since the City of Cape Town began predicting it. As of 15 January, the dams were 28% full and if we continue using water at the current rate we will run out of water on 21 April. This calculation assumes that we can't use the last 13.5% of water in the dams and that there are no new sources of water available by this date. Substantial new water sources are not likely to come on line before April, so the only thing that can really push out Day Zero is if YOU and I use less water and save water NOW!

2. What is likely to happen on Day Zero?

On Day Zero, the city will move into full-scale Emergency Stage 3. This means that water to households and businesses will be cut off. There will not be enough water in the system to maintain normal services and the taps (and toilets) will run dry. Only vital services will still receive water. These are hospitals and clinics, stand-pipes in informal settlements and the 200 points of distribution (PoDs) where people can collect their allocated 25 litres per person. All other mains water supplied by the city will be cut off. Most schools will have to close if they don't have their own safe supply from boreholes or rainwater tanks. Many businesses will not be able to operate unless they can provide temporary (off-mains) toilets and drinking water.

3. I hear that Day Zero is longer than a day, how long will Day Zero last?

Once the taps are switched off, we don't know how long it will be until they are switched back on again for different neighbourhoods. The amount in the dams will take months to recover. It is likely that if we have the same amount of winter rainfall as last year we will not see an increase in the dams until August. It could be that re-establishment of basic water services will only happen deep into the winter months. We should be prepared to live with very little water for at least three months and possibly up to six months after Day Zero, but it all depends on when rain falls in the water source areas that feed the dams.

4. When are the new water sources expected to come online?

The City's dashboard shows that most new sources (groundwater, desalination and reclaimed water from waste water treatment plants) are about 50% complete and some are behind schedule. 150 million litres (ML) per day of groundwater, 120 ML of desalinated water and 22 ML of reclaimed water are planned to come on line by the end of the year. This is not enough to meet Cape Town's current demand of about 600 ML/day. Initial sources are expected to be ready by April/May with larger volumes coming online from groundwater and desalination in July/August. So there will be some reprieve, but not close to Cape Town's usual requirements. Adjusting to life with much less water will be the new normal.

5. Drought-stricken Beaufort West also relied on groundwater and it has now dried up.

How confident are we that we have enough groundwater?

Beaufort West was abstracting groundwater from different types of aquifers that had different volumes of water available as well as lower recharge rates than the aquifers targeted by the City. Cape Town is lucky to have three different aquifers within its area and close to the major water supply network. In the long term we will need to change how we manage groundwater as well as the activities in the recharge zones if we are to protect them and use them fully to store strategic sources of water underground. We will need to use storm water and treated waste water to enhance the recharge to aquifers (rather than discharging it to rivers). This has already been successfully done at the Atlantis aquifer for more than a decade.

6. If I'm not strong enough to fetch and lift my city allocation of water, how will I get water?

During times of crisis, we need to look after each other more than ever, especially people who are elderly and not able to get water from the new sources that become available. Whatever happens, it's likely that you will have to queue, carry and in some cases treat your own water. We're going to need to get to know our neighbours better and assist them where possible. You might have an elderly neighbour who is not on social media and doesn't have access to this information - please print it out for them and start the conversation about looking out for each other. We'll be making detailed suggestions soon about what neighbourhoods can do to get ready to get through the crisis together. If you are worried about your own ability to fetch or carry water start speaking to friends, neighbours and family now.

7. Is it already too late to buy a rainwater harvesting tank and think about saving water?

It's never too late to save water - we can only save it now while we have it! Because the municipal mains system will take time to be able to recover and deliver water, we will have to wait for enough rain to fall for the rivers to start flowing and fill up our dams. So you'll get rainfall on your property before you get water out of your tap. It is still worth planning to supplement your household water sources as much as possible (if you haven't done so already!).

8. I've been flushing my toilet with grey water, but without shower water in buckets we won't have enough grey water to flush – what about the toilets?

That's true. Come Day Zero we will have to use very small volumes of water in our households (whatever you can carry in a bucket or container from a point of distribution or from a shop, or transport in your car or in a wheelbarrow from a neighbour's borehole) that there may not be enough to flush. It's very likely you'll have to think about alternate 'dry' sanitation systems at home. Some people might start trying to build temporary pit latrines and people in apartments are going to need smaller, mobile, dry systems. We'll be talking to some dry sanitation experts about what is possible at home and sharing that in a later Wednesday Water File.

9. Will my office still be open?

It's likely that many businesses will not be able to stay open - either because they rely on large volumes of water for their core functions or because they are not able to offer safe water and sanitation to employees for their time at work. Start talking to your boss and your colleagues now: How are your premises prepared for Day Zero, and how can you work remotely, via the cloud, if not? How many people will need to stay at home because their children's schools are closed?

10. Should we stockpile water and store it?

We should all have some emergency reserves of drinking water safely stored at home BUT you are not allowed to stockpile large volumes of water from municipal supplies. DO NOT fill up your rainwater tanks using municipal drinking water. You could buy 5-litre bottled water during your weekly shop and keep that safe as you prepare for Day Zero. Make sure the bottles are clean and keep them in a cool, dark place.

THE ONLY WAY WE CAN DELAY DAY ZERO IS BY DRASTICALLY REDUCING OUR WATER USE NOW.

DAY ZERO PREP

THIS WEEK'S BUCKET LIST:

- MONITOR how many litres you are using each day by reading your water meter. If you live in a block of flats, do this exercise and divide the total by the number of flats in the block. As a business, you should already be monitoring your water use to ensure you've cut back.
- Check out your status on the Cape Town water users map:
<https://citymaps.capetown.gov.za/EGISViewer/>
- Make sure you have a minimum EMERGENCY SUPPLY of drinking water at home and re use clean bottles to store water.
- TALK to your neighbours, community groups, body corporate, colleagues, boss, school principal and governing body about plans for Day Zero and how we are going to look after each other to get through this together.