

TREES AND DROUGHT



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Trees need water to survive. Once established, most trees are able to find their own water. However, it is recommended that newly-planted trees are given 50 litres of water per week during the summer months for the first three years after planting.

Trees deliver many environmental, social and economic benefits and play a vital role in mitigating the effects of the climate crisis, including cooling temperatures and helping with water management. **Trees are part of the solution**, and watering young trees is an investment in the future.

Sustainable sources of water should always be used wherever possible to do so. This might include captured rainwater or water reused from a bath or shower. Water is a critical resource and should be acknowledged as such.

In times of prolonged dry weather, water shortages can lead to the introduction of water usage restrictions. Different areas and water companies may have different rules during times of drought, and it is important to establish what is and isn't allowed in your area.

Water usage restrictions: There are two key levels of water usage restrictions.

Temporary Use Bans (TUBs)

Commonly referred to as hosepipe bans, TUBs typically apply to domestic customers. Individual water companies determine which water uses are restricted for household customers in order to reduce domestic use of water. Under a TUB:

- **Contractors** engaged to water trees on a commercial basis should not be affected and should be able to continue irrigating trees, using a hosepipe if necessary.
- **Residents** who water trees in their gardens or who water trees in public places in a voluntary capacity should be able to continue to do so, provided they do not use a hosepipe in the process (either directly, or to fill another container).
- **Local Authorities** and Councils using their own staff to water trees in public places should be able to continue to do so provided they do not use a hosepipe in the process (either directly, or to fill another container).

Drought Order Restrictions

This level of water usage restriction is applied by water companies to commercial ventures/non-household companies. This might include commercial car washing or window cleaning, and could potentially include companies commercially watering trees in gardens or public spaces.

- A **Drought Order** can only be granted by the Secretary of State, who must be satisfied that *"by reason of an exceptional shortage of rain, a serious deficiency of supplies of water in any area exists or is threatened."*
- In the event of a Drought Order coming in to force, residents, contractors and Local Authorities are advised to **speak to their local water company** to determine restrictions.

If in any doubt about water restrictions in your area, contact your water company.

Always use sustainable sources of water wherever it is possible to do so.

For more information about tree watering, visit trees.org.uk/watering.

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