

St. Mary Drought Worsens

St. Ann and Portland also Affected

Conservation Tips

IN THE KITCHEN

- A dripping faucet can waste up to 7,600 litres (2,000 gallons) of water per year.
- Wipe away gravy, grease and food scraps from plates and bowls before washing.
- If you wash dishes by hand, don't leave the water running for rinsing. If you have two sinks, fill one with soapy water and one with rinse water. If you have only one sink, gather washed dishes in a dish rack and rinse them with a panful of water. Similarly, don't let the faucet run while you clean vegetables. Just rinse them in a sink or a pan of clean water.

OUTDOORS

- Instead of washing driveways, sidewalks, gutters and steps, use a hard broom to sweep these areas.
- Don't use fresh water for your plants and garden. Save the rinse water from your kitchen or laundry, and do your watering in the early morning - this prevents fungus growth, which occurs when you water at dusk.
- Don't let your children play with taps, hoses and sprinklers. Their innocent frolic on a hot day could waste hundreds of gallons of precious water.
- Wash your car with a bucket of water and a rag, not a running hose.

Despite scattered showers in other sections of the country, the National Water Commission (NWC) is still struggling with the effects of an on-going drought in sections of St. Mary (as well as, to a lesser extent, in parts of St. Ann and Portland) following months of little or no rain, reducing many sources to a mere trickle while pushing up the demand for the precious commodity.

Affected systems in St. Mary that have fallen by as much as 70% include Lucky Hill, Cresses Spring/Iterboreale, Gayle Spring, Pleasant Hill, Rock Spring, Sand Hill, Bonny Gate and Annotto Bay Spring.

The worst affected systems in Portland include Windsor Castle, Craig Mill, Haining Spring, Windsor Forest, Kensington, Long Bay, Turtle Crawl and Grants Level while the Lime Hall system is one of the St. Ann systems being affected.

Water systems in these normally wet parishes have been suffering from low yield at sources for several months, but the situation has worsened in recent weeks even while other parishes have been receiving rainfall. Several water sources are showing a downward trend in output as a result of inadequate rainfall in the particular water catchment areas.

In responding to the drought conditions the National Water Commission has implemented a range of water management measures to best cope with the drought but some negative impact on customers is unavoidable. These measures include valve regulation; scheduled restrictions; maximum abstraction at sources; augmenting supplies from other sources; and trucking of water to affected areas (including the use of additional trucks brought into the parish at the National water Commission's expense).

The drought conditions are particularly severe as it has also increased the demand for water at the same time that the supply has declined drastically. A number of areas not served by the National Water Commission are also severely affected. While the NWC will make every effort to assist in these non-NWC-served areas where it can, the National Water Commission's first priority is providing service to its customers in the areas normally served by the National Water Commission.

The National Water Commission regrets the inconvenience to its customers and urges understanding and continued cooperation while every effort is made to ensure that the available water is evenly distributed across the parish. The NWC also urges the public to conserve on their use of water at this time more than ever.



Water is life