

NWC In Search Of More Water

Minister of Water and Housing, Dr. Horace Chang, earlier today personally accompanied National Water Commission (NWC) President, Mr. E. G. Hunter and other executives of the NWC as well as representatives of Jamaica Water Supply Improvement Project (JSIP) contractor Vinci Construction in initiating the drilling of exploratory boreholes in the Temple Hall area of St. Andrew as the NWC continues its quest to identify and develop additional sources of water.

Dr. Chang and Mr. Hunter explained that the drilling of the boreholes represents the first step in developing and establishing 2 new well sources at Halls Green to

provide a combined total of 2 million gallons of additional water each day. These new wells form part of the Jamaica Water Supply Improvement Project (JSIP) which will be implemented over the next 24-36 months.

At a cost of US\$211M the Jamaica Water Supply Improvement Project is the largest and most expensive water supply project ever to be undertaken by the NWC and will provide an additional 20 million gallons of water each day to address the perennial water supply problems which for decades have plagued sections of the Kingston Metropolitan Area (KMA).

The project includes a num-

ber of discreet water supply project components and will benefit a number of different areas, including several rural communities by significantly increasing the percentage of rural households with access to reliable in-house potable water supply.

The major components of the Jamaica Water Supply Improvement Project are: Replacement of the old Rio Cobre pipeline, which brings water from Bog Walk along the Gorge to the KMA, in order to reduce leaks and improve supply reliability to the KMA; Rehabilitation of the Constant Spring Water Treatment Plant and the intakes providing water to the plant to restore production capacity and im-



Minister of Water and Housing, Dr. Horace Chang (right foreground), discusses a series of exploratory boreholes being drilled in Halls Green, Temple Hall as part of the search for more water to meet the needs in Kingston and St. Andrew. Also in the discussion (l-r) are NWC Project Manager, Mr. Garth Jackson; Country manager for Vinci Construction, Mr. Etienne Andre; NWC President, Mr. E. G. Hunter; and NWC Chief Engineer, Mr. Franklin Williams (partially hidden behind the Minister).

prove supply reliability; Rehabilitation of the Seaview Water Treatment Plant and the Stony Hill supply network in order to improve plant capacity and enhance supply reliability; Construction of new wells at Halls Green to provide additional potable water; Installation of approximately 75,000 customer meters in Ocho Rios and the KSA to more accurately determine consumption and reduce commercial losses; Construction of a new pipe-

line from Ferry to Red Hills to improve supply to the Red Hills area; Improvements to the Forest Hills supply network to replace old mains and reduce leakage; Construction of a new 15 mgd water treatment plant in Spanish Town to provide additional water to meet demand in the KMA; Implementation of a number of rural water supply projects in various parishes in an effort to increase rural supply coverage;

Construction of irrigation facilities to make treated effluent from the recently completed Soapberry Sewage Treatment Plant available for irrigation to supplement irrigation water in the Rio Cobre canal.

The Minister of Water and Housing was assured by the NWC and the contractor that everything possible is being done to expedite the project and to deliver improved water supply to NWC customers in the shortest possible time.

Water Rationing For Corporate Area Communities

As part of ongoing water management measures to combat the prevailing drought conditions affecting a number of water supply systems mainly in the southern parishes of the island, customers of the National Water Commission (NWC) served by the Mona and Hope water

treatment plants will soon begin to have their daily water supply further rationed.

Beginning on **Monday February 8, 2010**, the following schedule was implemented for selected communities:-

Communities	Days To Be Served	Time of Day to be Served
Karachi, Long Mountain, Mountain View and surrounding areas Liguanea Area, Mona Heights, August Town, Old Hope Road, Cross Roads, Hope Road, Police Officer's Club, Kings House and surrounding areas	Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays	4:00 am – 8:00 am & 4:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Hope Pastures	Tuesdays & Saturdays	4:00am – 12 noon
Beverly Hills	Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays and Sundays	6:00am – 10:00am 4:00pm – 8:00pm
Gordon Town and Tavern	Thursdays	4:00am – 12 noon
Kintyre and Hope Flats		12 noon - 8:00pm
Elletson Flats and surrounding areas	Wednesdays & Saturdays	4:00am- 8:00am

The Mona and Hope Treatment Plants will also continue to be shut down each night from 8:00 pm to 4:00 am. In addition, the Constant Spring Treatment plant will continue to be shut down every day from 5:00 pm to 4:00 am.

Customers in the areas of Lower Jacks Hill, Cherry Gardens, Barbican and sections of Millsborough who are served by the Constant Spring system will receive water daily between the hours of 4:00am and 2:00pm.

Other restrictions for Havendale and Portmore will remain in effect as follows:

- Sections of Portmore – no water or low water pressure from 9:00 am to 3:30 pm on weekdays (Mondays – Fridays).
- Sections of Havendale – no water or low water pressure from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm on weekdays (Mondays – Fridays).

Like several other water supply systems in mainly southern parishes, the water supply systems serving the Corporate Area have been severely impacted by a prolonged period of below-normal rainfall caused by El Nino and other abnormal weather phenomena since last year.

According to NWC Vice President, Mr. Michael Dunn, the problem is that the dwindling inflows are not sufficient to meet the daily needs of all the customers to be served or to operate the systems at their normal levels. Because the NWC can only provide the water that it has, this will result in severe

shortages in some areas, regardless of the distribution regime that the NWC puts in place.

Regrettably, the NWC further explains that depending on their location, elevation, distribution and the customer demand in a particular area, some customers will experience no water conditions or low water pressure even during the hours that the water facilities are putting out all the water they have available. This is primarily because of the nature of water supply distribution and the fact that the systems will not be able to operate at optimum while receiving only a fraction of the required volumes of water to distribute as well as the time it takes to charge the water supply mains in various areas.

The National Water Commission appeals for the continued cooperation and understanding of all its customers as these necessary measures are implemented to manage our dwindling water supplies. Customers are again urged to expect disruptions, store water and practice careful conservation of the available supplies as trucking will only now be carried out on a prioritized basis for hospitals, health centres, schools, public institutions and for communities still severely impacted by no water conditions for prolonged periods.

The NWC is also reminding customers who purchase water from private providers to ensure that the water purchased is from a reputable and sterilized source. Customers are also being encouraged to make sure that their methods of water collection, storage and usage are safe and hygienic.



A DRY HOPE RIVER INTAKE: This picture of the Hope River Intake from which the NWC needs millions of gallons of water daily for the Hope Filter Plant and the Mona Reservoir doesn't give much hope for relief from the prevailing water shortage.

TIPS FOR WATER SAFETY

During periods of water lock offs it is important to maintain water safety.

STEPS TO ENSURE THAT STORED WATER REMAINS PURE

- Collect water in clean containers.
- Cover container during storage
- Pour water from containers or use a clean vessel with a handle to remove water from storage.

Sometimes when water is restored in some areas the water may be discoloured. In such instances catch the first run off in a container and

use for other purposes, e.g., watering plants.

Use only treated water for the preparation of food, drinking and making ice.

If water is collected from untreated sources such as rivers or streams it can be made safe by either: - Boiling water in covered container for at least five (5) minutes.

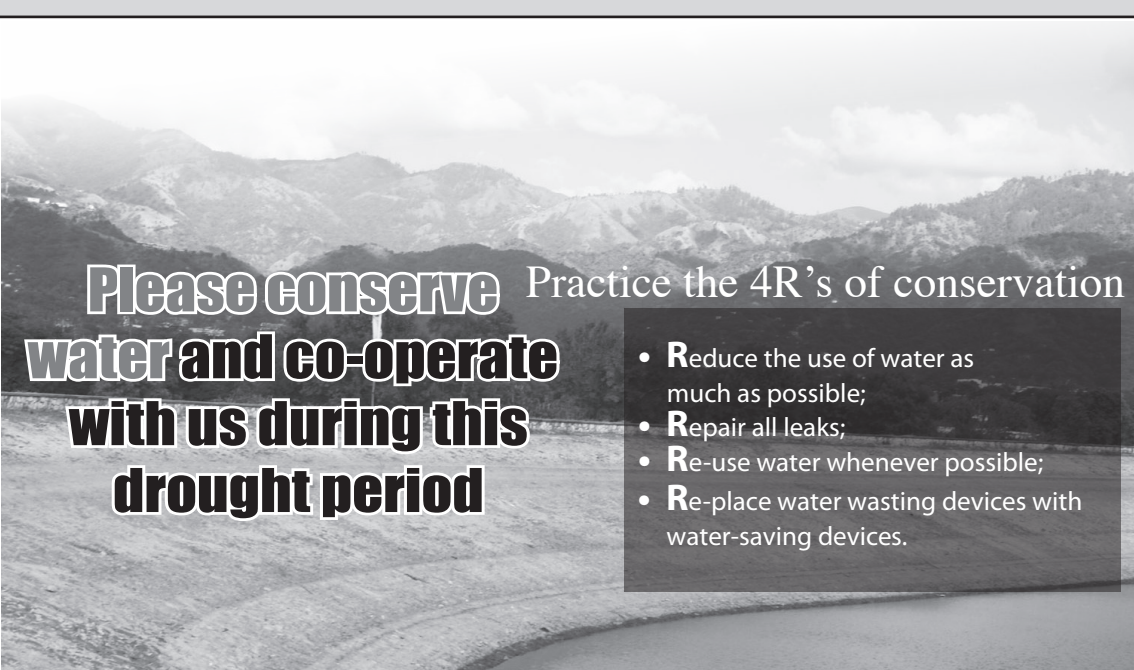
Or Adding one (1) teaspoon of bleach to every five (5) gallons of water.

Or Adding two (2) drops of bleach to every one quart or one litre) of water.

NB. Water that is treated with bleach must be allowed to stand for at least thirty minutes before use.

Water that is obtained from trucks is treated; however, due to extra handling it is best that this water be boiled or treated with bleach when using it for drinking or food handling.

If any foreign body, discoloration or odour is noted, maintain water safety by following the above procedure and call National Water Commission at **929-3540-5 or 1-888-CALL NWC.**



Please conserve water and co-operate with us during this drought period Practice the 4R's of conservation

- **R**educe the use of water as much as possible;
- **R**epair all leaks;
- **R**e-use water whenever possible;
- **R**e-place water wasting devices with water-saving devices.