

Drought and Water Provision in Antigua



Overview

The twin island nation of Antigua and Barbuda is currently experiencing a prolonged drought period, spanning for close to two years. Due to the lack of sufficient rainfall the Antigua Public Utilities Authority (APUA) has ceased pumping water from all its surface water sources in Antigua. The majority of the water is sourced from several Reverse Osmosis plants with a very small percentage being sourced from wells.



Dunnings Dam, Bendals (July 2015)



Potworks Dam, July 2015

Water Provision in Antigua

On a daily basis the nation of Antigua requires approximately 7-8 million imperial gallons. Under normal circumstances water is obtained in the following quantities from the listed sources:

Desalination - 60%

Surface Water- 30%

Ground Water- 10%

Current Situation

Given the lack of surface water, potable water is obtained daily, from the following Reverse Osmosis plants in the listed quantities:

Sembcorp - 3.7 million imperial gallons

NS Management - 600,000 imperial gallons

Camp Blizzard (APUA plant) - 400,000 imperial gallons

Ffyres Beach (APUA plant) - 400,000 imperial gallons

Water is also obtained from wells ranging between 600,000-800,000 imperial gallons per day. It must be noted that ground water is being extracted cautiously in order to preserve the integrity of the wells. An approximate timeline for the use of ground water has not been established.

The lack of surface water creates a short fall of almost 2 million imperial gallons daily which has forced APUA into a water rationing situation. The Authority is currently working on a more equitable rationing schedule which will assist in water distribution. The schedule will be released shortly.

During the latter half of the year APUA expects to commission a containerised Reverse Osmosis plant in the English Harbour area which will supply an additional 400,000 imperial gallons per day.

Conservation

This drought situation requires all citizens to adopt a conservation lifestyle in regards to water use. It also must be noted that obtaining water solely from reverse osmosis is an extremely costly process which uses an enormous amount of energy. This makes the need to conserve even greater.

At this time APUA asks all consumers to reduce or eliminate the use of water for all non essential activities. For more information on water conservation practices please visit the APUA website www.apua.ag/greentigua