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# El Niño Preparedness

## Frequently asked questions

## EL NIÑO READY JOBURG
## PREPARE TODAY. PROTECT

### Understanding El Niño

**1. What is El Niño?**
El Niño is a natural climate pattern that can influence weather around the world. In Southern Africa, it is commonly associated with hotter temperatures and below-normal or irregular rainfall, although effects vary by place and season.

**2. Does El Niño automatically mean Johannesburg will experience a drought?**
No. El Niño does not automatically mean drought. It can increase the likelihood of hotter conditions, reduced or irregular rainfall and longer dry periods. Preparing early helps the City and residents manage possible impacts.

**3. What conditions are being watched for the 2026/2027 summer?**
There is a possibility of hotter-than-normal conditions and below-normal or irregular rainfall. Forecasts can change, so follow the latest official seasonal forecasts and City advisories.

**4. Why is the City preparing now if drought is not guaranteed?**
Early preparation gives municipal services, businesses, communities and households time to reducemavoidable water use, check infrastructure, protect vulnerable people and prepare for possible heat and weather-related risks.

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### Water supply and conservation

**5. How could hot and dry conditions affect Johannesburg's water system?**
Hot weather can increase water use while reduced or irregular rainfall may put pressure on available water resources. Higher demand can place additional pressure on reservoirs, towers and distribution networks. Some areas, including high-lying areas, may experience low pressure when the system is under strain.

**6. Is Johannesburg Water taking action?**
Johannesburg Water's preparations include including monitoring reservoir levels and demand, managing pressure, repairing leaks and bursts, deploying first-line response teams, and using demand-management measures or throttling where necessary.

**7. Are water restrictions already in place?**
Level 1 water-use restrictions are currently in place and stronger restriction levels may apply if conditions worsen and the City's drought-management plan is invoked. Residents should check current official City and Johannesburg Water notices for the restrictions that apply at the time.

**8. What can I do to save water at home?**
Take shorter showers; turn off taps while brushing your teeth, shaving or washing dishes; fix leaking taps, toilets and pipes; use a bucket instead of a hose to wash vehicles; avoid hosing down paved areas; reuse suitable greywater where safe and appropriate; and cover swimming pools to reduce evaporation.

**9. When should I water my garden?**
Use water sparingly and water early in the morning, before 06:00, or in the evening, after 18:00. Always follow current restrictions, which may prohibit irrigation during specified hours or altogether.

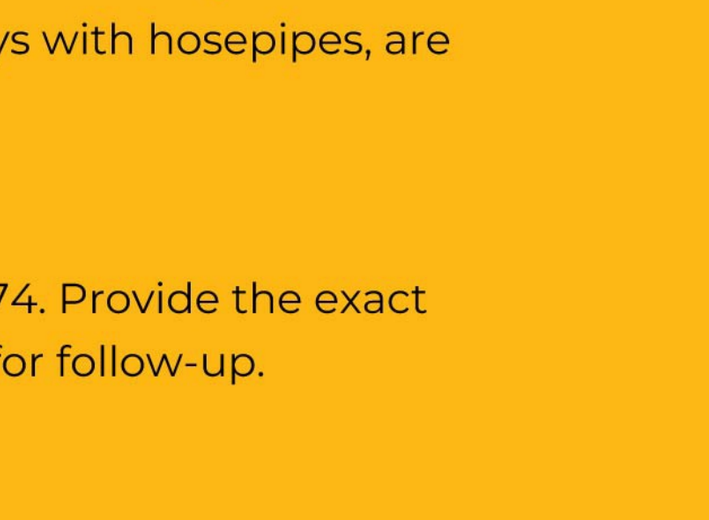
**10. Can I wash my car or clean paving with a hosepipe?**
Avoid using hosepipes to wash vehicles or paved areas. Use a bucket where appropriate, and follow restrictions in force. The supplied Level 1 restriction material says watering gardens and filling swimming pools between 06:00 and 18:00, and washing paved areas and driveways with hosepipes, are not permitted.

**11. How do I report a leak or burst pipe?**
Call Johannesburg Water's call-centre numbers on 010 061 4470 and 0860 056 2874. Provide the exact address, nearest intersection and a clear description. Keep the reference number for follow-up.

**12. Why might water pressure be low even if there is water in the system?**
Demand may be high, the network may be undergoing pressure management, or a local fault may be affecting supply. Johannesburg Water's materials note that high-lying areas may experience low pressurefirst. Report persistent problems through official channels and retain your reference number.

**13. Does one rainfall event immediately restore water availability?**
No. One rainfall event does not immediately restore water availability or the whole water system. Water resources and supply systems need time to recover, and rainfall may not be evenly distributed.

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### Heat, storms and community preparedness

**14. Is the only risk drought?**
No. Summer preparedness also needs to account for extreme heat, severe thunderstorms, flash flooding and other weather-related hazards. El Niño is a climate pattern, not a disaster by itself, but it can increase the probability or severity of certain hazards.

**15. How can I prepare for very hot weather?**
Drink water regularly, limit strenuous activity during the hottest part of the day, seek shade or a cool place, and check on children, older people, people with disabilities and anyone vulnerable to heat. Follow official health and emergency advice.

**16. What should I do during severe thunderstorms or flash-flood warnings?**

Follow official weather and Disaster Management alerts. Avoid crossing flooded roads or flowing water, move away from drainage channels and low-lying areas when flooding threatens, and follow instructions from emergency services.

**17. Where can I get reliable updates?**
Follow official City of Johannesburg, Johannesburg Water, South African Weather Service and Disaster Management communications. Do not rely on unverified social-media messages; check the date and source of any alert.

**We cannot control the weather. We can control how we use water.**
Prepare today. Protect tomorrow. Every action counts. Save water, report leaks and help protectJohannesburg's water security.

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