

A lower rate of water consumption in the South African city of Cape Town has resulted in Day Zero - when residents may have to start queueing for water - being pushed back to July 9.



The City of Cape Town said this was due to a weekly drop in dam levels of only 0.5% as compared to a 1.9% drop in 2014.

The lower consumption rate is attributed to the [Groenland water](#) reaching Steenbras Upper Dam last week and slightly increasing the dam level, as well as to a further reduction in the city's weekly average demand to 523 megalitres per day (MLD) compared to 1,130 MLD in 2014.

"The Groenland water transfer and the reduction in our weekly average demand has had a dramatic impact on the Day Zero date, which is determined by assuming that the fortnightly trend of weekly dam storage change will continue unchanged," said the city's executive deputy mayor Alderman Ian Neilson.

"This precautionary outlook assumes no further rainfall and that water demand may not reduce over the next few months. It has been adopted to allow sufficient lead time for implementation of temporary water collection points in the event that these may be required."

Neilson estimates Day Zero could move back into June again once the Groenland transfer has been completed unless the city is able to meet the 450 MLD collective water usage target.

"Therefore it is imperative that we reach this target to make it through to the winter rains," he said.

"Today I urge the residents of Cape Town not to ease up on their water-saving efforts. We cannot afford to slow down when the estimated Day Zero date moves out, simply because

we cannot accurately predict the volume of rainfall still to come or when it will come.

"Last year we had abnormally low winter rainfall, and we cannot assume that this year will be any different."

He said the only way residents can stretch their water suppliers is to adhere to the 50 liters per person per day allocation, and now was "definitely not the time to ease up."

"We once again want to thank the Groenland Water Users Farming Association for the water transfer, which made a considerable difference when we needed it most," he said.

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