




Speech By
Hon. Anastacia Palaszczuk

MEMBER FOR INALA

Record of Proceedings, 13 October 2022

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Disaster Preparedness, Dam Water Releases

 **Hon. A PALASZCZUK** (Inala—ALP) (Premier and Minister for the Olympics) (10.07 am): My government is committed to ensuring Queenslanders and communities remain safe. My government is committed to addressing cost-of-living pressures which are biting hard at families. Today I can announce significant moves to address both.

Earlier this week and yesterday I highlighted the urgent need for Queensland families to start preparing now for a storm season which the Bureau of Meteorology has forecast will deliver an increased risk of widespread flooding for our state. With parts of Queensland already saturated, the threat of floods is here and it is real. In light of these forecasts, families and communities must be prepared. But the government must also be ready. We have all seen what has been happening with devastating flooding in New South Wales and Victoria. Tasmania is about to experience a significant flood event. We must be ready for the worst.

From Saturday, Seqwater will begin the release of water from Wivenhoe Dam in an early move to prepare for the worst-case scenario based on the BOM advice. This release will continue for a proposed two-week period and will reduce the dam level from 90 per cent to 80 per cent. In line with legislation, the Minister for Water has the power to authorise this release. It is being done safely and in a controlled manner and it is being done to ensure we are on the front foot after the crucial BOM advice. It will involve the proposed release of 116,000 megalitres of water from the dam to improve flood mitigation capacity in a safe and controlled release to reduce capacity ahead of the 2022-23 storm season.

The good news for families and households is that this will result in a significant cost-of-living reduction. We will reduce water bills for all South-East Queensland households connected to the Seqwater grid to the equivalent of two weeks worth of free water. That will apply to approximately 1.38 million homes. It allows for the use of 13,200 litres of free water for each of those homes and families—that is about double the normal household usage over a fortnight—and it will mean a \$55 discount on water bills for each of those 1.38 million families.

It will apply to homes not only in Brisbane but also within the Redlands, Logan, the Gold and Sunshine coasts, Noosa, Ipswich, the Lockyer Valley and the Somerset, Scenic Rim and Moreton Bay regions. I encourage families to make the most of this rare opportunity and gurni away. Gurni the driveway, wash down the house, clean out your gutters, wash your cars and wash your dog. The discount will apply to water bills before December and will be fully rolled out by March.