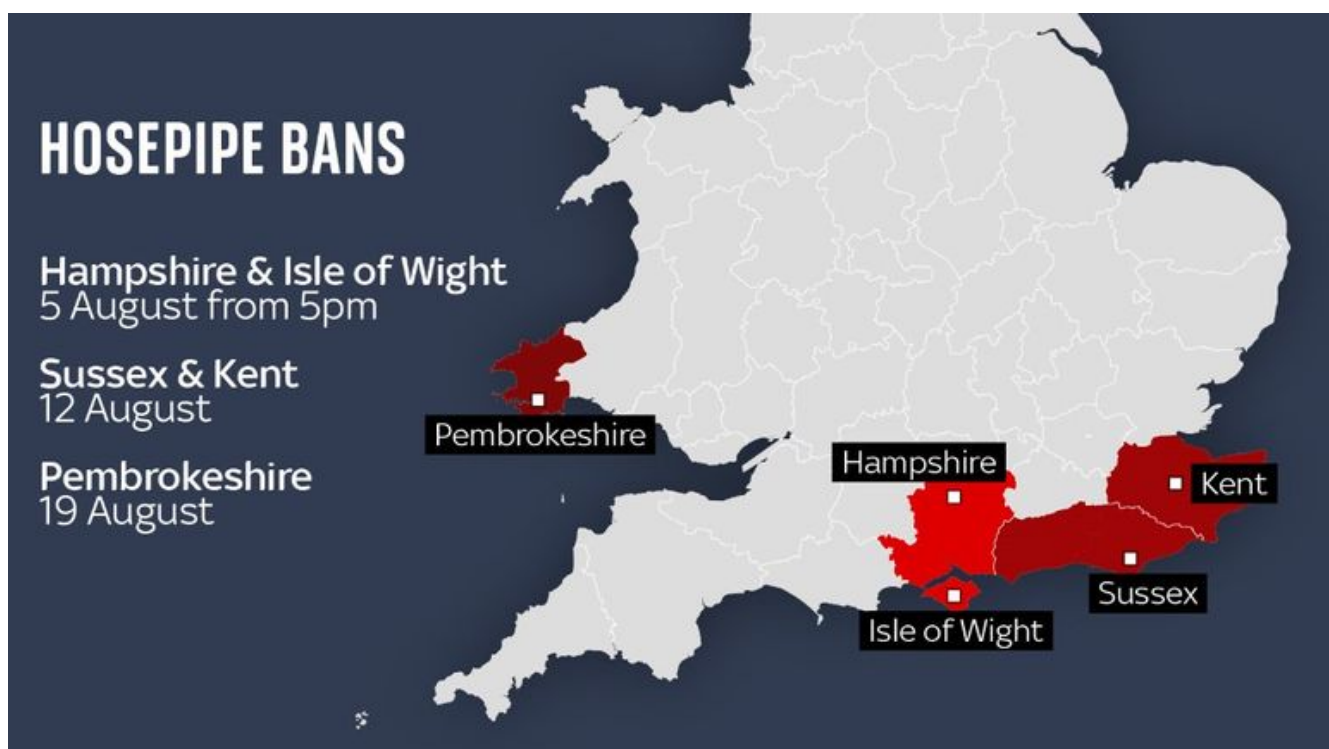


# Water companies across the UK 'strongly urged' to enforce hosepipe bans as another heatwave looms

Water companies across the UK are being "strongly urged" to enforce a hosepipe ban.

Environment Secretary George Eustice says some local providers "have rightly taken action to mitigate the effects of this prolonged dry weather" – but other utility companies are yet to follow suit.

Writing in The Sunday Telegraph, Mr Eustice warned the "very unusual" mix of record hot weather and low rainfall means suppliers must go further to ensure there's an adequate water supply.



A [hosepipe ban](#) has now come into force in parts of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight for the first time in 10 years – with

restrictions to be rolled out across Sussex, Kent and Pembrokeshire later this month.

Thames Water, which has nine million customers and is the UK's largest water company, has said temporary restrictions may be required unless the public take steps to use water more efficiently.

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It has warned that reservoir levels are below normal for this time of year, and supplies will continue to reduce in the months ahead unless London and the Thames Valley receive average or above average rainfall.

Water-saving tips include swapping hoses for watering cans, taking shorter showers, and turning off the taps while brushing teeth.

In the long term, Mr Eustice has said that the government wants English suppliers to reduce the amount of water used per person by 20% without affecting quality of life – driven by a clampdown on leakages.

Stressing that everyone needs to do their part, he wrote: "Saving water is about reducing unnecessary consumption, not restricting essential use.

"There are lots of actions you can take to save water at home and in the garden. Installing a water-saving device in your toilet cistern or checking your household appliances for leaks can save huge amounts of water."

Mr Eustice added that he expects water companies "to step up" – and if they fail to make changes, he "won't hesitate to step in and take further action".

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How will hosepipe ban be enforced?

All of this comes as the UK braces itself for another heatwave.

Highs of 28C (82.4F) are expected in parts of the South and South East of England today, with dry weather forecast to continue for up to 10 more days.

Met Office senior meteorologist Greg Dewhurst said: "Overall Augusts tend to be a wetter month so it is fairly unusual to have prolonged dry weather over August."