

Murcia to get water-saving regulations



Wednesday, 28 June 2006

Murcia is to become the first autonomous region in Spain to have strict water-saving measures applied to it.

Amalio Garrido, the head of Murcia's water company, Aguas de Murcia, has announced the plans to impose strong measures to ensure that the region will not dry up in the future. As such, the area will become the first to have specific regulations which will cover the use and conservation of water. Mr Garrido is confident that the proposals will be in place before the end of the year.

It is hoped that the move will help to save large quantities of water in the Murcia area to ensure that the current water supplies will be sufficient to deliver water to the vast number of new properties being built in the region. The move is designed to quell fears among developers over the potential banning of future development projects because of a lack of water being supplied to the region.

Concerns over a possible lack of drinking water have been raised by the Segura Water Board, which has previously announced that even current property development projects should be put on hold until sufficient desalinated water can be delivered to Murcia to ensure a healthy supply to those projects. The rapid pace of development in Murcia has put something of a strain on the infrastructure of Murcia and officials in the region are working hard to keep up with the huge demand.

As part of this effort, the Tajo-Segura Aqueduct Committee, which oversees the management of the Tajo-Segura pipeline from which Murcia receives the majority of its water supply, will this week recommend to the cabinet that there should be a transfer of 39 cubic hectometres of water to sustain current requirements and to guarantee drinking water during the summer months.

The new measures outlined by Mr Garrido will serve to restrict water usage on new developments, so that future construction of properties will require swimming pools to be restricted to 40 square metres. Community swimming pools will also have a size restriction, limiting development to pools no larger than 200 square metres.

Continuous wastage of water will result in the most serious penalty being imposed under the new regulations, with those found guilty of the offence liable for a €600,000 fine. Water economisers will be mandatory on all taps and showers in new buildings, while toilet cisterns will be allowed a maximum of seven litres of water.

It is hoped that the new scheme will ensure the long-term sustainability of the Murcia region as its property boom continues and investors seek to sink their money into the area.