

Record consumption leaves Kuwait facing water shortages

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CRISIS WARNING: Kuwait's Ministry of Electricity and Water is planning facilities to provide an additional 40 million gallons of water per day.

Kuwait residents are consuming more water than ever before, and face serious shortages if there are delays to the completion of planned desalination facilities.

The daily Al-Watan newspaper reported that consumers in the Gulf state are using an estimated 399 million gallons a day, just one million gallons short of the country's total daily production capacity.

The paper said that the Ministry of Electricity and Water is planning facilities to provide an additional 40 million gallons per day, which should be enough to cover projected demand for next year.

However, the ministry warned that given Kuwait's booming population, more production capacity will be required in 2012 and 2013.

By this time, the newspaper said, the government hopes to have opened the Zoor production and water desalination facility, planned to produce 200 million gallons of water each day.

However, the newspaper added that some senior ministry figures have expressed concerns they lack the authority to push through tenders for major projects. These responsibilities have been left with the shareholding companies asked by the government to implement the major projects.