

Beijing to melt snow to address water shortage

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Beijing will collect and melt snow this winter in a bid to quench the water shortage that has plagued the Chinese capital for years, state media reported Friday.

Two vehicles with high-powered heaters capable of processing around 100 cubic metres (3,500 cubic feet) of snow and ice an hour will be sent to locations around Tiananmen Square, the Global Times said.

Clean snow will also be dumped into dammed sections in three rivers that drift through the city to be used for road cleaning, [irrigation](#) and to supplement the rivers' water levels, it said.

Additional snow-melting areas have been assigned citywide, it added.

For years northern China has been battling a water shortage that experts say is caused by [global warming](#), [drought](#) and rising demand from tens of millions of people who live in Beijing and the booming areas around it.

Water consumption in [Beijing](#), with a population of nearly 20 million and growing, rose to 3.55 billion cubic metres last year, compared with its water supply of 2.18 billion cubic metres, the Global Times said.

The city was hit by its worst snowstorm since 1951 on January 3 last year, which lasted 20 hours with an average snowfall of nearly 11 millimetres (less than half an inch).

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