

Beijing Reservoir Unfit Even For Irrigation - Report

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Country: CHINA

The official Xinhua news agency cited a report by the Beijing Municipal Environmental Protection Bureau as saying that water in the Guanting reservoir fell short of standards for level five on the country's scale of water quality.

Water at levels one to three is considered potable, while that at level five is fit only for irrigation, Xinhua said.

It added that around half of the lakes and ponds in the city's scenic spots were so polluted that they could not be used for irrigation.

China faces a serious water pollution problem that is compounding water shortages in many cities.

The official China Daily last week cited an unnamed official as saying that two-thirds of Chinese cities face water shortages, in part because large amounts of untreated waste water are pumped directly into lakes and rivers.

Last November, an explosion at a benzene plant in the northeastern province of Jilin caused 100 tonnes of toxic benzene to spill into the Songhua River, leaving millions in the downstream city of Harbin without drinking water for nearly a week.

<http://www.planetark.com/dailynewsstory.cfm/newsid/39201/story.htm>