

How to be waterwise Water for our future

Be waterwise

Water is a precious resource and we need to conserve it now and for our future. By changing some of your habits you can:

- ◆ save water
- ◆ save money
- ◆ save the environment.

Being waterwise is easy. Make a difference today!

Bathroom

We use more water in our bathrooms than in any other part of the house. It's a great place to start when looking for ways to save water. Here are some water-saving ideas.

- ◆ Shower to your favourite song—when the song is finished, you should be too.
- ◆ Install a 4-star dual-flush toilet—you can save up to 8 litres of water every flush.
- ◆ Turn the tap off when brushing your teeth or shaving, and save up to 15 litres a minute.

Tip: A leaking toilet can waste more than 90 000 litres of water a year. Check for leaks by putting a little food colouring in the tank. If the colouring begins appearing in the bowl without flushing, have the cistern repaired immediately. Flush as soon as the test has been completed.

Kitchen

Water use in the kitchen contributes to up to 13 per cent of total household water consumption for cooking, cleaning, washing or drinking. There are many ways to save water in the kitchen.

- ◆ Use the dishwasher. Running a full load in a water-efficient dishwasher uses less water than washing dishes by hand.
- ◆ Rinse vegetables in a bowl and then use the water on your garden.
- ◆ Store drinking-water in the fridge—running the tap until it is cool wastes up to 15 litres a minute.

Laundry

Select a washing machine with a 4-star rating or better. Front-loading washing machines can use up to 50 per cent less water, 35 per cent less detergent and 30 per cent less energy than top-loading machines.

There are a number of other ways to save in the laundry too.

- ◆ Pre-treat stains to limit the need to rewash.
- ◆ When adjusting warm water flow, always turn the hot water down rather than the cold water up.
- ◆ Divert greywater from your washing machine for immediate use on your garden (except vegetables).

Garden

Careful planning and good gardening habits can make a big difference to your watering needs.

- ◆ Don't over-water, as waterlogged soil encourages the growth of bacteria and fungi, which cause disease in plants.
- ◆ Mulch generously—it reduces water loss by up to 70 per cent, improves your soil and discourages weeds.
- ◆ Compost food scraps—compost enriches the soil by helping it to absorb and hold more water.

Tip: Investigate ways of redirecting water from downpipes for use on your garden.



Pool

- ◆ A properly fitted pool blanket can stop up to 97 per cent of evaporation. Reduced evaporation also reduces the amount of chemicals required to treat the water.
- ◆ Check pools for leaks—a tiny leak could result in a large amount of water loss.
- ◆ Build your pool in an area that is shaded during the hottest parts of the day. This will reduce evaporation and help you avoid the sun's harsh rays while you swim.

Tip: Mark the water level of your pool at the skimmer. Check the mark 24 hours later. Your pool should lose no more than three centimetres each day.

Around the home

A few simple one-off modifications to fittings and appliances can save water on a daily basis.

- ◆ Select the right water heater for your needs and make sure the temperature is not set too high—between 55 °C and 60 °C is optimal. If the hot water temperature is too high, you will use more water adding cold to cool it down.
- ◆ Install a rainwater tank to decrease demand on town water supplies and reduce your water bills.
- ◆ Replace old showerheads with water-efficient models. These can save more than 10 litres per minute compared to older types, with little or no noticeable difference in water pressure.
- ◆ Install flow restrictors and aerators into taps around the house.
- ◆ Turn all taps off properly and check the condition of washers to reduce wastage.

Finally, check regularly for leaks, and keep all water fittings and equipment in good condition.



Saving water for the future

As Australia's fastest-growing state, Queensland has unique and additional challenges in supplying its population with water.

Treating water for use in homes and businesses requires costly and energy-intensive infrastructure, which impacts on the environment. We cannot rely on rainfall to provide us with all the water we need, so it is important that we reduce our water consumption and use water responsibly.

Water sustainability is an issue of vital importance to all Queenslanders. By using water wisely, we can all help to make sure we have enough water now, and in the future. Make a difference today!

More information

To find out more about:

- ◆ WELS (Water Efficiency Labelling Scheme) ratings, go to <www.waterrating.gov.au>
- ◆ water-saving products for around the home, go to <www.smartwatermark.org>

Other waterwise information is available at <www.derm.qld.gov.au/waterwise> or from your local council or distributor-retailer.