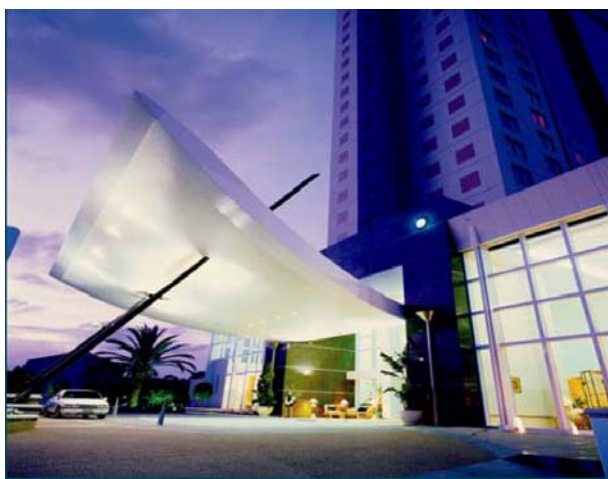


Water efficiency business profile

Watermark Hotel and Spa Gold Coast

The Watermark Hotel and Spa Gold Coast is a 4.5 star international hotel nestled in the heart of Surfers Paradise, Gold Coast. Consisting of 388 guest rooms and suites, the hotel offers an extensive range of facilities that complete an entertainment and relaxation experience.



Water conservation approach

The Watermark Hotel and Spa Gold Coast is an accredited AAA Tourism Green Star hotel in recognition of its environmental practices and initiatives. The standards for Eco-Friendly STAR Accreditation were developed from a partnership between AAA Tourism and Green Globe, under the guidance of the Australian Government established Sustainable Tourism Cooperative Research Centre.

The Watermark Hotel and Spa recognised the need to raise awareness and protect the environment by reducing the amount of energy and water consumed. Some other environmentally friendly activities include the use of energy saving power devices and renewable energy, recycling programs and

state of the art water management practices.

Research for new technologies was conducted as part of this initiative. Implementing the Permaclean System for the cooling towers was suggested at an executive meeting by the Chief Engineer. Its installation was unanimously approved due to its environmental practices and the simplicity of retrofits to the existing cooling tower, with very little down time.

Water conservation objectives

The Watermark Hotel and Spa's primary objective was to achieve and maintain their Green Star accreditation, while reducing costs. In 2004, the Watermark Hotel and Spa installed two electrostatic, chemical free cooling towers. Their other objectives were to substantially reduce water consumption and its associated costs including:

- water costs
- trade waste costs
- energy costs
- chemical costs

To reach their targeted objectives, Watermark Hotel and Spa also implemented:

- A time controlled air conditioning unit in their conference area
- A system to capture roof run-off for use in their water feature
- Water efficient fixtures in all amenities

Actual savings from water conservation

The Permaclean water treatment system uses electrostatic energy to create a positive field in the water. This bonds bacteria and stops it absorbing food or reproducing. As no toxic chemicals are used to eliminate bacteria, the build up of scale and bio-film is virtually eliminated and corrosion is minimised with no risk to staff, the general public and the environment. Water can safely be recycled, avoiding trade waste costs associated with chemical treatment systems.

Data collection from the cooling tower system at the Watermark Hotel and Spa has revealed that Cycles of Concentration (CoC) of up to 16 have been achieved with a total system loss of 6.06 percent .

This exceeds the Queensland Water Commission's requirements of 5 CoC and a maximum system loss of eight percent, considered an efficient cooling tower system.

In total, the Watermark Hotel and Spa has reduced its water consumption from 55.3 mega litres or 207 litres per person per day in 2005/06 to 40 mega litres or 148 litres per person per day. A saving of 28 percent, despite a two percent increase in guest numbers. The hotel is committed to reducing this figure further with ongoing water conservation efforts and new initiatives.

Water conservation efforts ongoing

The Watermark Hotel and Spa is committed to staying abreast of new technologies and introduced the following initiatives to help reduce water consumption at their Gold Coast and Brisbane hotels, forming part of their Water Efficiency Management Plan (WEMP).

These initiatives include the installation of Urimat Waterless Urinals installed in the male toilets, dual flush toilet cisterns, nine litres per minute flow restrictors installed to all internal taps and showers, monitoring of the supply and bleed meters on the cooling towers and a reduction in garden irrigation.

An underground water bore is used to water all gardens; eliminating the use of potable water. If required, by using a timer, garden watering is carried out in the mornings only, to reduce evaporation. In areas with limited access, a drip irrigation system is installed and recycled mulch and bark is added as ground coverage to retain moisture. Garden plants have been specifically selected for their minimal water requirement, including heat and drought tolerant species.

The hotel also encourages staff and guests to support their commitment to water conservation by providing water conservation messages and reminders in guest rooms and hotel amenities. The hotel's close relationship with Allconnex Water ensures they are always provided with new complimentary materials. They also receive the latest news on water conservation measures and tips through Allconnex Water's 'Water Biz' eNewsletter.

Water conservation is a high priority for the hotel and is a weekly agenda item at the executive meetings. The Chief Engineer is responsible for the management of water consumption at the Brisbane and Gold Coast sites and continues to research new technologies to build on the already implemented strategies.

Allconnex Water congratulates Watermark Hotel and Spa Gold Coast for setting sustainable water saving benchmarks.