



# Permanent Water Conservation Measures

## Residential fact sheet

### Background

The Queensland Water Commission (QWC) imposed Permanent Water Conservation Measures (PCWM) commenced on 1 December 2009. Consistent water conservation measures across SEQ are intended to secure water supplies in the future.

Residents are encouraged to continue to use less than 200 litres per person per day. Permanent water conservation measures apply for all SEQ areas, including the Gold Coast, Logan and Redland.

### General

- Water Efficiency Management Plans (WEMPs) apply.
- Efficient sprinklers and hoses can be used to water gardens and lawns (but not from 10am to 4pm or on Mondays).
- Vehicles and outdoor areas can be washed at any time – as long as water is used efficiently.
- New pools can be filled with town water and existing pools can be filled as long as efficient fittings are in place.
- Rainwater can be used at any time.

### What can residents do outdoors?

#### Gardens and lawns

- Existing gardens and lawns can not be watered between 10am and 4pm or on Mondays, as this is the hottest part of the day and the highest evaporation period.
- Outside these hours, gardens and lawns can be watered using a bucket, watering can, hand held twist or trigger nozzle hose or an efficient sprinkler or efficient irrigation system.
- An efficient sprinkler or irrigation system is one which uses less than nine litres a minute and is used with a manual or electronic timer.
- Don't use a non-fixed sprinkler for more than 30 minutes.
- New gardens and lawns can be watered at anytime on the day of establishment.
- Refer to the QWC's Efficient Irrigation Guidelines at [www.qwc.qld.gov.au/Efficient+Irrigation](http://www.qwc.qld.gov.au/Efficient+Irrigation)

## **New pools and spas**

- New swimming pools and spas can be filled with town water, but efficiency measures will continue to apply when topping up pools and spas.

## **Topping up existing pools and spas**

- Topping up existing swimming pools and spas with town water is only allowed as a last resort and only where a rainwater tank or downpipe rainwater diverter has been installed at the premises and all rainwater from these devices has been used.
- Premises must have:
  - a rainwater tank or downpipe diverter installed and connected to the pool or spa.
- And three out of the four following efficiency measures installed:
  - a pool or spa cover
  - water efficient showerheads, kitchen and bathroom taps
  - water efficient toilets
  - water efficient washing machines
- Or be accredited as an EcoPool.

## **Water play**

- Town water can be used if the water play pool or toy can recirculate the water or uses less than 500 litres of water.

## **Outdoor Cleaning**

- Cleaning vehicles, boats and caravans, buildings and equipment must be undertaken efficiently using a bucket, hand held trigger nozzle hose or a high pressure cleaner.
- Town water can not be used to clean paths, driveways and paved surfaces, except where they are significantly dirty, or they pose a risk to health, safety or the environment.

## **Other outdoor water uses**

### **Outdoor showers**

- Outdoor showers can be used.

## **Animals and pet care**

### **Pets**

- Residents can continue to use town water for washing and cleaning their pets' enclosures with a high-pressure cleaning unit. Pets can be washed with a hand held hose and town water can be used for drinking water.

### **Animal husbandry**

- A rainwater tank must be installed and all water used before town water is used for animal husbandry purposes.
- Town water can only be used to clean animal pens and enclosures if a high pressure water cleaning unit is used.

## **Building and construction for residents**

- A hand held hose, bucket or a high pressure water cleaning unit can be used on residential construction sites. The construction site must be attended while water is being used.

## **Fountains, ponds, fish/frog ponds or outdoor aquariums**

- Residents can only use town water to top up or fill the above if the water is recirculated or uses a maximum of 200 litres per week.

## **Rainwater tanks**

- Rainwater tanks must not be filled or topped up with water from your tap or from a water tanker which has been filled using the town water supply. Some exceptions apply including where the tank is the only source of water supply.

## **Lakes, dams and other water storage**

- Residents cannot use town water to top up or fill lakes, dams and other water storage facilities.

## **Water saving tips for residents**

### **General**

- Check for leaks regularly, and fix them.
- Install water saving devices in your home.

### **Bathroom**

- Install a three-star (or better) WELS water-rated showerhead.
- Reduce your shower time to four minutes.
- Don't let the tap run when brushing your teeth or shaving.
- If you don't already have one, install a dual flush toilet.
- Can't afford a new toilet? Purchase a water displacement device or have a plumber adjust the flow-rate.

### **Kitchen**

- Half fill the sink to rinse dishes or clean fruit and vegetables.
- A water efficient dishwasher uses less water than washing your dishes in the sink.
- Wait until you have a full load before turning on the dishwasher and use a water saving setting.
- When buying a dishwasher, choose a water efficient model. Look for the water efficient labelling.
- Install flow controlled aerators on taps.

### **Laundry**

- If you buy a new washing machine, choose a water efficient front-loading model with a minimum 'four star' (or better) rating.
- Make sure each cycle is a full load, or adjust the water level to suit the size of the load.
- Look out for the WELS 'star rating' label when you buy your new appliance and check [www.waterrating.gov.au](http://www.waterrating.gov.au) for a list of water efficient products that can save money and help the environment.

## Outdoors

- Use a broom to sweep paved outdoor areas instead of hosing them down.
- Always use a trigger hose, bucket or watering can when washing your car or watering the garden.
- Wash the car on the lawn – the lawn will get a good watering at the same time.
- Collect your shower water with a bucket to water your garden.
- Install a rainwater tank to use in the garden.

## In the garden

- Aerate the lawn to allow water to be absorbed more easily.
- Select drought tolerant plants to reduce water needs.
- Use a good mulch.
- Keep all your kitchen scraps, lawn clippings and garden waste and make a compost heap.
- Minimise lawn areas or select drought resistant grass varieties.
- Add water crystals to soil to enhance water retention.
- Improve water-holding capacity by planning your garden, so that pathways feed water runoff onto garden beds.
- Enjoy and observe seasonal changes to discover what is best for your garden.

## High water users

- Households using more than 1200 litres a day without a valid reason will be sent an excessive water use notice. If high water use continues after two notices have been sent, penalties will apply, including an outdoor water ban.
- Exclusions and exemptions may apply to:
  - large households (5 people or more)
  - leaks that have been fixed
  - special health reasons
  - home business (with a valid reason for requiring water)
  - building or renovation development
  - change of ownership or tenancy
- Households consisting of five or more people should not exceed 300 litres per person per day.

**For more information visit [www.qwc.qld.gov.au](http://www.qwc.qld.gov.au) or call 1300 789 906.**