

FACT SHEET WATER EFFICIENCY



All businesses use water, even if it's only for the staff kitchen and for flushing toilets.

This fact sheet will give you some ideas about water efficiency in your business and what you can do to start saving water.

EASY, LOW-COST STRATEGIES

Taps and hoses. Ensure that you turn off taps and hoses quickly and properly. Putting trigger mechanisms on all hoses makes them easier to turn off quickly.

Check and maintain plumbing and equipment. A leaking tap can waste up to 2,000 litres of water a month. Carry out regular inspections for water leaks in taps, toilets and hoses - repair any leaks promptly. You might like to consider installing sub-meters on different parts of your system to allow you to track and manage leaks more easily.

Do a leak audit. Record your water meter reading during a shutdown period such as a weekend or overnight, for example, last thing on Friday and again first thing on Monday. If the meter indicated the same numbers then you don't have a leak. Make sure all water sources are shut off for the period and remember cleaners often work at night. Consider asking the cleaner to read the meter if necessary.

Review your cleaning practices. Take a look at how you clean hard surfaces in your facility. Decide if you could change the way you clean to reduce your water use.

- Are you using high-pressure, low-volume hoses to maximise efficiency?
- Could you use buckets rather than hoses for some cleaning?
- Could you sweep before hosing down - or instead of hosing down?

Reduce sink sizes. Large sinks encourage staff to run more water. Consider using a smaller container inside the sink, or installing smaller sinks. Smaller containers can then be emptied onto gardens and lawns.

Do not defrost food under running water. Plan ahead and defrost food in the fridge overnight. Not only will you save water, you will also save energy, by allowing the frozen food to act as the coolant in the fridge.

Scrape excess food from plates. Instead of rinsing dirty plates and dishes, scrape excess uneaten food from the plates and soak the dishes in a full sink.

Only use the dishwasher when it is full. It will use the same amount of water half full as when it is completely full—use the economy cycle where possible.

Mulch garden beds and plant drought-tolerant plants. To reduce evaporation, mulch garden beds. Choose drought-tolerant plants to reduce the amount of water you need to provide. Drought-resistant varieties of grass often cost more to purchase but will continue to thrive in difficult conditions, and reduce your long-term water costs.

Choose recycled paper as often as possible. Recycled paper uses less water in the production process than virgin paper.

THE ECOBIZ TEAM IS ALWAYS
AVAILABLE TO HELP YOU.

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INVESTMENT STRATEGIES

Install water-efficient taps. A standard running tap releases approximately five litres of water each minute—installing aerators can reduce this to around one litre. You might also be able to install elbow-action or sensor-activated taps, so that they are easy to turn off while people are soaping their hands. Speak to your plumber for more advice.

Consider installing rainwater tanks. You may be able to install rainwater tanks to supply water for purposes such as toilet flushing, washdown and watering your landscaped areas. Speak to your local council or service provider about what is permitted.

Recycle greywater. Water that has already been used for washing and cleaning is known as greywater. Some greywater can be treated and re-used for toilet flushing and other approved purposes. Greywater treatment systems generally include a holding tank and filtration system, and come in a range of prices and sizes. Speak to local council or service provider about the systems permitted on your property.

Install dual-flush toilets and low-flow showerheads. If your building doesn't already have them, consider dual-flush toilets for both public and staff facilities. They will dramatically reduce your water use. If you provide showers in your amenities, make sure they have low-flow showerheads.

Replace old appliances with new, water-efficient models. Choosing appliances (e.g. dishwasher) with a good water rating can reduce your water use for that appliance by as much as 50 per cent. Look for appliances with a five or six-star rating.

Water Efficiency in Cooling Towers. Do you have cooling towers on site? Cooling Towers use a lot of water. For more information see a fact sheet prepared by the Australian Institute of Air Conditioning, Refrigeration and Heating about water efficiency in cooling towers: www.airah.org.au/imis15_prod/Content_Files/BestPracticeGuides/BPG_Cooling_Towers.pdf.



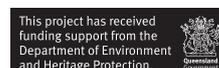
NEXT STEPS

1. Listen to an [ecoBiz webinar on water efficiency](#).
2. Book your coaching session to talk about water efficiency.
3. Monitor your water (and other metrics) through the free online ecoBiz Benchmarking tool.
4. [Read the case studies on the website](#).
5. Look for more opportunities in your business using the [ecoBiz Site Survey checklist](#).
6. Download the other [fact sheets and resources](#) for you to use in your business.

For more information about water efficiency visit the Australian Government website www.environment.gov.au/topics/water/water-cities-and-towns/water-efficiency-opportunities-program.

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