

Water Wise Policy

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Resolution number:	469/23
Next Policy review date:	September 2024
Reference number:	52.5.4
Strategic Pillar	Infrastructure
Responsible Branch	Utilities

1 OUTCOMES

- 1.1 To establish Council's commitment to its Water Wise initiative and to outline the various programs and incentives that support its goal for improved water efficiency.

2 POLICY

- 2.1 The Water Wise program is designed to increase public awareness about water conservation and to encourage, through various incentives, the more efficient use of water. The aim of the program is to assist in the reduction in use of a scarce resource as well as expenditure in terms of pumping and treatment costs.

3 SCOPE OF THE POLICY

- 3.1 The Water Wise program will offer the incentives outlined in this policy to eligible owner/occupier home owners in Queanbeyan, Bungendore, Braidwood and Captains Flat who are connected to Council's Water Supply. The policy is not available to commercial properties or other non-residential properties.
- 3.2 The Googong Township has been excluded from the provisions of this policy by virtue of its special status as a 5-star Green Star Community rating whereby its IWCM plan already targets a 60% reduction on potable water usage.

4 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 *BASIX* – Building Sustainability Index

5 LEGISLATIVE OBLIGATIONS AND/OR RELEVANT STANDARDS

- 5.1 Plumbing fixtures to be according to AS3500.1 and AS3500.2

6 CONTENT

6.1 Free Home Audit

- 6.1.1 Home owners may make application for a free Home Audit to be carried out by a trained licensed plumber through the Masters Plumbers Association. The process included the following:
- a) Contact audit of plumbing fixtures – includes inspecting all fixtures for leaks (except laundry tubs, hose taps or baths);
 - b) Test of incoming water pressure;
 - c) Inspection of water meter and conduct of a low-flow test to ensure it is operational under low flow conditions;
 - d) Conduct of a 10-minute reading test to check for undetected leaks;
 - e) Check of any irrigation system for potential issues with cross contamination;
 - f) Provision of professional advice to homeowner, and
 - g) Provision of written report to Council and the property owner as to the outcomes of the audit and specific water saving measures that the owner could undertake.

- 6.1.2 The cost to Council for this service will be as agreed between Council and its service provider and will be adjusted annually in line with CPI movements (Sydney – All Groups).
- 6.1.3 The completion of a Home Audit is a pre-requisite for the toilet suite replacement initiative and each property shall only be eligible for the Audit once in any five-year period.
- 6.1.4 The Home Audit is limited to one laundry, one kitchen and up to two bathrooms.

6.2 Retrofit Toilet Subsidy

- 6.2.1 Owners who have the Home Audit carried out are entitled to have their single flush toilet replaced with a 4.5 litre suite. A similar arrangement is available for homes that have an existing dual flush toilet greater than six litres in capacity. This will be subsidised at a maximum of \$321.00 per toilet (or 50% of the cost for supply and installation – whichever is lower) with a maximum of two per household. The subsidy shall be adjusted annually in consideration of both actual historical installation costs for the previous financial year and CPI movements (Sydney – All Groups), whichever is the lesser.
- 6.2.2 It is expected that eligibility would be determined at the time of the Free Home Audit at which time the owner would apply through Council's agent, the Master Plumbers Association.
- 6.2.3 The works to be undertaken would require approval by Council with arrangements for the works on site to be undertaken by the Master Plumbers Association using a standard suite as agreed by Council. No other alternative suits are available for use under this scheme and no subsidy is available for customer-provided suites. The gap between Council's subsidy and the service fee charged by the Master Plumbers Association shall be met by the applicant. The Master Plumbers Association shall invoice the applicant directly for the gap.
- 6.2.4 The subsidy is available only once per property for the duration of this program.

6.3 Rainwater Tank Subsidy

- 6.3.1 This initiative within the policy has two main objectives:
 - a) To encourage a greater level of community participation in retro-fitting rainwater tanks by having less onerous requirements on tank sizes to be installed.
 - b) To provide the necessary incentive to new home-builders to install larger than the minimum size tanks required to satisfy BASIX.
- 6.3.2 In keeping with these objectives, two categories of rebates are offered:
 - 1) Category 1 Rebates – for retro-fitting rainwater tanks to existing homes
 - 2) Category 2 Rebates – for rainwater tank installations that exceed the requirements of BASIX for new homes.

6.3.3 The level of rebate is set as detailed in the following tables:

REBATES AVAILABLE FOR RAINWATER TANK(S) RETRO-FITTED TO EXISTING HOMES

(Category 1 Rebates)

Tank Size	Connection to Outside Watering	Connection To Toilet(s)	Connection to Laundry/Washing Machine	Maximum Total Rebate
4,000 – 9,999L	\$350	\$234	\$234	\$818
10,000 – 19,999L	\$467	\$234	\$234	\$935
20,000L or greater	\$701	\$234	\$234	\$1,168

Notes:

1. Tanks of 10,000 litres and greater size need formal development approval however Council will not charge any development application fees for these applications.
2. Connection arrangement shall be in accordance with AS.3500.1 and 2(2018).
3. The above amounts apply in 2023/2024 and will be adjusted for CPI (Sydney) in subsequent years.
4. Eligibility subject to applications being received within 3 months of the date of tank purchase.

6.3.4 In addition to rebates for retrofitting rainwater tanks to existing homes, the policy also provides rebates to new home-builders who install rainwater tanks that are larger than those required by BASIX (40% savings) in accordance with the following scale.

REBATES AVAILABLE FOR RAINWATER TANKS THAT EXCEED BASIX REQUIREMENTS FOR NEW HOMES

(Category 2 Rebates)

Water Saving According to BASIX	Provided Water Tank Size \geq 10,000L and tank is connected for Toilet Flushing (\geq 3 Star), Laundry Use and calculations include $>$ 150 sq metres of Outside Watering from the tank
45-50% saving ¹	\$374
50% saving ¹	\$748

Notes:

1. To demonstrate this level of water saving will require the submission of a BASIX certificate with the application for rainwater tank rebate.
2. The above amounts apply in 2023/2024 and will be adjusted for CPI (Sydney) in subsequent years.
3. The rebates do not apply to rainwater tanks that are required as a conditions of a subdivision approval.
4. To be eligible under the category the rainwater tank rebate application need to be approved by Council before installation.

7 REVIEW

- 7.1 This policy will be reviewed every four years or earlier as necessary if:
- a) legislation requires it, or
 - b) Council's functions, structure or activities change.