

Water saving hints

Water is a precious and increasingly scarce resource. We need to be careful about the way we use it. All Queensland households must comply with any water usage requirements set by their local government authority. This includes being aware of any water usage guidelines.

Here are some simple ways to help monitor and reduce water usage. Please also take the time to check your property for water leaks using the checklist on the next page. More information is available through the Department of Energy and Water Supply website at <http://www.dews.qld.gov.au/policies-initiatives/water-sector-reform/30-year-strategy>.

Water saving hints – outside the home

- Wash your car on the lawn using a bucket and sponge, not a hose. This can save up to 300 litres of water each time you wash the car.
- Sweep paved areas, driveways and paths with a broom, not a hose.
- Native plant species require less water once they are established. Consult your local nursery for advice on choosing plants native to your area. They will also require less fertiliser and pesticides, and attract birds and other wildlife to your garden.
- Mulch garden beds to reduce water loss of up to 70% through evaporation. Mulch also stores water for plants to use and helps to prevent weeds.
- Deep watering once a week, in accordance with your council's regulations, will encourage plant roots to grow deeper. The plants will seek water from below rather than close to the surface, reducing watering requirements.
- Set your lawn mower's cutting height to three centimetres or higher to avoid cutting your lawn too short. This will reduce the amount of water your grass will require to remain green and healthy.

Water saving hints – inside the home

- Do not let the water run while brushing your teeth or washing your face. This will save up to 5,000 litres per year.
- Turn off the tap when shaving and rinse your razor in a plugged sink. You could save more than 3,500 litres per year.
- Shorten your shower time. If you spend less time in the shower, you can reduce your water usage by up to 20 litres for each minute. This means just two minutes less in the shower each day could save up to 14,000 litres of water over a year.
- Put the plug in the sink when washing vegetables or rinsing dishes.
- Select at least AAA-rated water-efficient appliances when replacing any appliances that use water. For example, consider buying a front-loading washing machine (AAA water rating) next time you need to replace yours. They use much less water than top loaders.
- Wash only when you have a full load or adjust your water level (if possible) to your load size. A top-loading washing machine can use between 110 and 265 litres of water for each load of laundry.

Check the water used around the home

Check all the following plumbing fixtures for any drips, runs or leaks. If you need help with this, please contact your nearest Housing Service Centre.

Bathroom

- hand basin taps
- bath taps
- shower head
- toilet cistern

Laundry

- washing machine taps
- laundry taps

Kitchen

- kitchen sink
- dishwasher hose connections

Outdoors

- dripping taps
- leaking pipes

Report any dripping taps, running cisterns, leaking pipes or faulty water connections to your nearest Housing Service Centre's maintenance phone number.

Test for leaking pipes

Important safety note

Meter covers and boxes can be a haven for spiders and snakes. Take care and wear gloves to help prevent injuries when checking your water meter. Do not allow children to touch water meter covers or boxes without adequate supervision or instruction.

Before doing this test, make sure you have checked all water fixtures in your home for leaks or faulty water connections.

If you do not find any evidence of leaking or damaged plumbing, check for concealed leaks by doing the following test:

- Take a water meter reading by writing down both black and red digits from left to right (black digits are kilolitres used and red digits are parts of kilolitres of water passing through the meter.)
- Do not use any water on the premises for at least one hour (including flushing the toilet) and then take another reading.
- If the meter reading has changed, there may be a leak in an underground pipe. Contact your nearest Housing Service Centre's maintenance number and report your findings as soon as possible.

Please note: Repairs needed due to a tenant's use of the property or a tenant's faulty appliance (for example, a faulty washing machine or dishwasher connection) may be considered to be the tenant's responsibility.