



Water saving hints

Water is a precious and increasingly scarce resource. We need to be very 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. For example, in South-East Queensland where level five water restrictions are in place, it is recommended that households use no more than 140 litres of water per person, per day.

This fact sheet outlines 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 second page. More information and water saving hints are available through the Queensland Water Commission's websites www.qwc.qld.gov.au and www.target140.com.au.

Water saving hints – outside the home

- Sweep paved areas, driveways and paths with a broom.
- Plant native species that 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 well to reduce water loss, which can be up to 70%, through evaporation. Mulch stores water for plants to use and helps suppress weeds.
- 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.

Water saving hints - inside the home

- Turn off the tap while you clean your teeth. Also, do the same while shaving or soaping up before washing your hands. It can save up to nine litres a minute.
- Shorten your shower time to four minutes. Cutting your shower time from seven to four minutes will save up to 36 litres every time.
- When rinsing dishes or washing fruit, part-fill the sink rather than running the water. A typical kitchen tap uses about nine litres a minute.
- Select water-efficient appliances when replacing any that use water. For example, consider buying a washing machine with a AAAA water rating when you need a replacement.
- Only wash when you have a full load. This can save an average of 20 litres a load.

Checking the water used in the home

It is important to check all plumbing fixtures for any drips or leaks. If you require assistance to check your home for water leaks, please contact your nearest Department of Housing office for advice or assistance.

Bathroom - Check for any dripping taps, running cisterns, or leaking pipes.

- hand basin taps
- bath taps
- shower
- toilet

Laundry - Check for any dripping taps, leaking pipes or loose hose connections.

- washing machine taps
- laundry taps

Kitchen - Check for any dripping taps or leaking pipes.

- kitchen sink
- if your household has installed a dishwasher, check the hose connections.

Checking the water used outside the home

- Check all taps outside the home for dripping taps or leaking pipes.

Report any dripping taps, running cisterns, leaking pipes or faulty water connections to your Department of Housing maintenance telephone number.

If you wish you can test your property 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 of the 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 this 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).
- Don't use any water on the premises (including flushing the toilet) for at least one hour, and then take another reading.
- If the meter reading has changed, there may be a leak in an underground pipe. Contact the Department of Housing maintenance phone 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 may be considered the tenant's responsibility, e.g. a faulty washing machine or dishwasher connection.