




# How to be waterwise

## Why be waterwise?

Water is an important part of our community, just like you. By using water wisely, you can help ensure we have enough water now, and in the future. Make a difference today!

### Being waterwise means:

-  you'll have a smaller carbon footprint as less energy is required to treat, pump and heat the water
-  you'll save money (if you are billed for the amount you use), and less water is required to be treated
-  more water will be kept in our ecosystems where plants and animals need it to thrive.

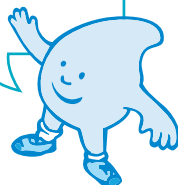
You can find how much water you use by checking your water bill or doing a home water audit (a water audit guide is available online by searching 'waterwise Queensland').

## Being waterwise starts at home

- ◆ Install fittings and appliances with a WELS rating of 3 stars and more, such as shower heads, taps, dishwashers and washing machines. Toilets should have a WELS rating of at least 4 stars.
- ◆ Install a rainwater tank or investigate ways to redirect water from downpipes to use on your garden. This can decrease your use of town water and reduce your water bills.
- ◆ Have a licensed plumber install flow restrictors and aerators into taps around the home.
- ◆ Check your thermostat isn't set too high. Adding cold water to reduce the temperature wastes water and electricity/gas.
- ◆ Insulate your hot water pipes to reduce the amount of time waiting for hot water to flow through them. Water heating can be up to 25% of your energy bill.

### Whizzy's waterwise tip:

Regularly peek for leaks! To find out if you have a leak in your pipes turn off all taps and make sure no one will be using any water. Check your water meter and take note of the reading. Recheck the meter after at least an hour. If the reading has changed, you might have a leak.



## Tips for creating a waterwise home



### Check for a leaking loo

Check for leaks by putting a little food colouring in the cistern. If colouring begins to appear in the bowl without flushing, have the cistern rubber repaired. Flush the toilet clean as soon as you have completed this test. **Fixing a continuously leaking toilet could save you up to 18 buckets of water a day.**



### Make every drop count

Collect water as you are waiting for it to heat or cool, and then use it on your garden or put it in a bottle in your fridge.



### Water only what grows

Use a broom to sweep outdoor areas rather than hosing them down. Use a bucket if you need to wash the area.



### Check for leaks in your pool

To check for leaks, mark the water level of your pool at the skimmer. Check the mark 24 hours later. Your pool should lose no more than 3 cm per day. A little leak could mean a lot of water lost.



### Plan then plant a waterwise garden

Use drought tolerant plants, and group plants together that have similar water, soil and sun requirements.

## Be waterwise indoors

### Kitchen

- ◆ Scrape, don't rinse, your dishes and use the dishwasher. Dishwashers use less water than washing by hand and are designed so you don't need to pre-rinse your dishes. If leaving dishes overnight, using the dishwasher's rinse function rather than the sink can save 1.5 buckets of water.
- ◆ When cooking vegetables, either boil them in a saucepan with the lid on or use a steamer. This helps them to cook quicker, retaining more nutrients, and saves water.
- ◆ Rinse vegetables in a bowl, and then use the water on your garden.
- ◆ Defrost food by putting it in the fridge to thaw out overnight rather than running it under water.
- ◆ Think before putting water down the sink! Empty your water bottles into your garden or pet bowls, instead of down the sink.

### Bathroom

- ◆ Shower for 4 minutes or less—this will save both water and electricity/gas. Reducing your shower by 2 minutes can save up 2 buckets of water.
- ◆ If you're taking a bath, fill it only one third of the way and you can save nearly 7 buckets of water compared to a bath half full.
- ◆ Swap your bath for a 4 minute shower and you can save over 65 buckets of water in a week - enough to fill a pool in a year!
- ◆ Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth, soaping up your hands, or shaving. This can save over 6 buckets of water a day.
- ◆ Use the half flush option in your toilet instead of full flush. This can save nearly 6 buckets of water in a week.

### Laundry

- ◆ Pre-treat stains to limit the need for rewashing.
- ◆ Wash with full loads to save water, electricity and time. By running one less load per week, you can save over 11 buckets of water.
- ◆ When adjusting the warm water flow, always turn the hot water down rather than the cold water up.
- ◆ Use small amounts of detergent to handwash clothes and reuse that water on the garden.
- ◆ Divert greywater from your washing machine and use it immediately on the garden (but not on any edible plants). Check if your local council has any guidelines for greywater use.

## Be waterwise outside

### Pool

- ◆ Use a pool cover. A properly fitted pool cover can stop up to 97% of evaporation; this will also reduce the amount of chemicals required to treat the water.
- ◆ Don't overfill your pool. Make sure the water level in your pool is only halfway up the skimmer box. Overfilling stops the skimmer from working efficiently and wastes water.
- ◆ Be cool in your pool. Build your pool in an area that is shaded during the hottest part of the day, or use a shade sail, to reduce evaporation and help you avoid the sun's harsh rays while you swim.
- ◆ Top up your pool with collected rainwater.
- ◆ Plant bushes or hedges around your pool to reduce evaporation caused by wind.

### Garden

- ◆ Water smarter. Water when it is cooler and less likely to evaporate. We recommend watering between 5-10 am, and at a slower rate for a longer time to encourage deep root growth.
- ◆ Don't overwater, as waterlogged soil encourages the growth of bacteria and fungi which cause disease in plants.
- ◆ Apply 7-10 cm of mulch. This reduces water loss by up to 70%, improves your soil and discourages weeds.
- ◆ If using greywater, consider using biodegradable detergents low in sodium, phosphorous and nitrogen as they are better for both your garden and the environment.
- ◆ Compost food scraps. Compost enriches the soil and helps it to absorb and hold more water.

### Outdoor areas

- ◆ Mow only when necessary and outside the heat of the day. Grass should be at least 3 cm high to prevent it from drying out and needing more water.
- ◆ Collect rainwater for use on your garden.
- ◆ Use a trigger hose or bucket when washing your car and try to wash it on the lawn.