

Prison moves to set a benchmark for water savings and efficiency

Water Corporation through its Key Customer Relationship Management program (KCRM) has developed a range of partnering initiatives with key customers aimed at improving their water management process.

To date 140-plus customers have participated in the diagnostic sessions and ongoing support programs.

Acacia Prison is one of the selected customers in the KCRM program and is a success story.

Acacia Prison at Wooroloo, 55 kilometers east of Perth, is the only privately run prison in Western Australia. The six year old facility is run by Serco, which has shown its commitment to water by partnering with CEDA in preparing a report that investigated sustainable water management plans in the commercial sector. The report was titled, Water that Works.

Acacia Prison management recently undertook the Water Corporation's Water Achiever® diagnostic session resulting in the launch of a number of water and energy saving projects on site.

Present at the diagnostic session were members of the facilities management team, as well as contractors, including a Permaculture Practitioner.

Acacia Assistant Director of Business Services Mark Oldfield said that all staff and prisoners were involved in the newly launched environmental and energy awareness program.

The program aimed to support staff and prisoners through training, education and habit building, environmental awareness and responsible personal action, inside and outside the prison.

"We have seven residential blocks at Acacia, and we are setting up an incentive

scheme that will reduce energy and water usage within the prison facility," Mark said.

"All onsite wastewater is treated and used for irrigation purposes. We believe we can now add substantially to this by recycling, reusing and catching rain water.

"Acacia houses 800 prisoners in the seven blocks, with each up to 168 prisoners per block. Every three months from now on a \$2000 bonus will go to the block that manages to save the most water and energy over that period of time.

"On top of that, in the months where residents don't get the \$2000, the winning block will get \$500 to spend on an environmental initiative, such as water saving or permaculture."

Mark said the awareness steering group intended to turn the Education Centre block in the middle of the prison complex into a carbon neutral facility. Gutters and rainwater tanks will be installed and greywater captured from sinks and reused in toilets.

"Approximately 500 prisoners plus staff use the Education Centre each week and a large volume of water is used there with toilets, wash basins and tea/coffee making facilities," Mark said.

"Our first permaculture course will start in October with a nucleus of 15-20 prisoners. We will be looking at a number of water saving initiatives including water saving practices and efficient watering of our grounds.

"On any one day we have more than 1000 people on site and water consumption throughout the prison is considerable. Our long term aim is to save half of what we use now by reusing the water a number of times.

"A retrofit of shower heads, hand basins and toilets may also be considered down the track. Meanwhile, water saving in this area will come through maintenance and, where necessary, replacement of product with a water saving device."

Othersustainability initiatives will include a major education program to reinforce the practical water saving measures being

taken in the prison. Additional water meters may also be installed to better track water usage in the prison buildings and its extensive grounds.

Water Corporation Key Customer Relationship Manager Sandra Montoya said the partnership between Acacia Prison and the Water Corporation was proving to be very successful with the benefits of raising water conservation awareness amongst the prisoners reaping rewards long into the future, when they are back in the community.

"It is great to see an organisation such as Acacia Prison so committed to water conservation and education," Sandra said. "It is a real success story on how we can all do something to ensure we conserve our precious water."

Water Achiever® is a registered trademark of Energetics Pty Ltd



Acacia Prison's onsite wastewater is treated and used for irrigation purposes

For more information on being Waterwise in your business, please visit www.watercorporation.com.au or contact Sandra Montoya on (08) 9420 2923