

ECU leads the way in tertiary education sector water management

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 the ongoing support programs.

Edith Cowan University (ECU) is one of the selected customers in the KCRM program and a great success story.

A decision by ECU management eight years ago to improve water efficiency on its four campuses has produced some interesting challenges, as well as significant opportunities for staff and students.

ECU initiated a major shift in its water management strategies following the introduction of an annual industry benchmark survey that included the majority of universities across Australia and New Zealand.

"Universities have always taken sustainability seriously, but when industry benchmarks were established and comparisons with other institutions were available, it provided both incentive and opportunity to generate savings in both water usage and waste water management" Stuart Downes, ECU's Manager of Electrical Services said.

ECU has 21,000 enrolled students and over 1800 academic and general staff across its Joondalup, Churchlands, Mt Lawley and Bunbury campuses. The campus operates with a gross floor area of 222,000 sqm with a further 12,000 sqm under construction.

The University has been committed to a major construction program over the past eight years, driven largely by campus consolidation. The recent building

program has added over 30,000 sqm to the major metropolitan campuses and in the process, provided the opportunity to incorporate simple but cost-effective water saving solutions. In some cases reductions in water consumption of 30%, compared with conventional installation, have been achieved.

Solutions based action plan

The extensive building program has provided management and staff with an opportunity to introduce targeted strategies to minimise water usage and wastage.

Developing an extensive metering network enabled ECU to better understand usage patterns and assess how individual buildings and water saving devices are performing.

Some examples of water saving devices now installed include waterless urinals, sensor flushing of toilets and water efficient shower heads in all student accommodation.

There have also been efficiencies in the area of waste water management, in particular with respect to on-site air conditioning waste water. Treated waste water from the cooling towers is gravity fed into an artificial lake where it is mixed with bore water for reuse in campus reticulation.

Future Initiatives

The University was encouraged by the enthusiastic commitment it received from both staff and students. It also appreciated the excellent working relationship it shared with the Water Corporation that has provided the opportunity to take part in the One 2 Five® Water review program.

"The use of our benchmarked performance data together with results from the Water Corporation's One 2 Five® Water program has highlighted key areas of achievement and opportunities for improvement in future years" Stuart said.

ECU will continue to introduce water initiatives that improve its water use

efficiency. On-going water audits will identify opportunities for continued improvement of the University's overall water utilisation.

Key Customer Relationship Manager Lee Pearson said ECU's performance in the One 2 Five® Water assessment shows it is leading the way in water management in the tertiary education sector. "ECU's ongoing commitment to water efficiency is a great example of how businesses are doing their part to help conserve WA's precious drinking water supplies".

One 2 Five® Water is a registered trademark of Energetics Pty Ltd.



Edith Cowan University Joondalup campus

For more information on being Waterwise in your business, please visit www.watercorporation.com.au or contact Lee Pearson on (08) 9420 2649

