

## more information

For more water saving ideas visit our website or call the Waterwise Helpline.

We also have a range of brochures available to guide you through making your house and garden more waterwise. Visit the website to download a brochure or call the Waterwise Helpline to have one posted to you.



**13 10 39** Waterwise Helpline

**13 13 85** Customer Centre  
(8am - 5pm weekdays)

**13 36 77** National Relay Service

ISBN 1 74043 634 2 - September 2011

This information is available in  
alternative formats on request.

[customer@watercorporation.com.au](mailto:customer@watercorporation.com.au)

[watercorporation.com.au](http://watercorporation.com.au)

it's easy to save  
water every day  
inside and outside  
your home





# How waterwise is your household?

take this simple test to find out

- Do you take short showers?
- Do you run your dishwasher with full loads?
- Do you mulch your garden?
- Do you regularly check your irrigation system and know how to program it?
- Do you know if your toilet is leaking?
- Is your lawn drought tolerant?
- Do you have a rain sensor?
- Do you choose waterwise plants for your garden?
- If you have a pool do you use a pool cover?
- If you have an evaporative air conditioner, do you know how to reduce the amount of water it uses?

If you answered 'No' to any of the above questions, this brochure can help you become more waterwise.

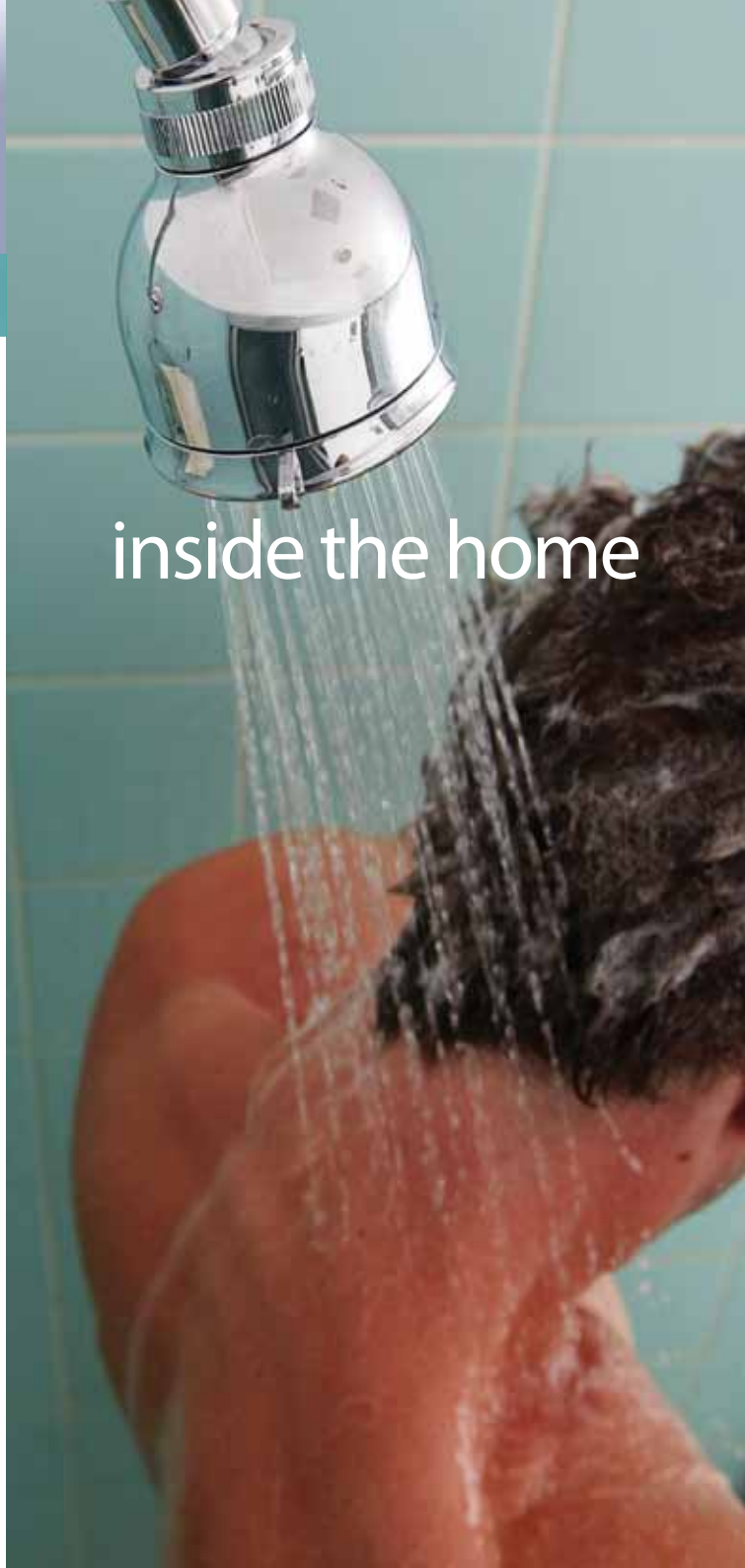
## conduct your own water audit

To do this:

1. Ensure no water using devices are in use.
2. Take a reading of the meter, left to right, including the red numbers. For more information on how to read your water meter, visit [watercorporation.com.au](http://watercorporation.com.au) or call **13 10 39**.
3. Carry out a normal water using activity, for example running irrigation, taking a shower, flushing the toilet or doing the dishes, making sure no other equipment that uses water is in use.
4. Read the meter again and make a note of how much water has been used.
5. Repeat for other activities.

Once you know how much water each activity uses you can take steps to reduce your water usage, starting with the simple tips in this brochure. Small changes to water use patterns in your home and garden can help save our precious water.





## get wise, get waterwise

We have a number of Waterwise Programs to help you save water, just look for the Waterwise Specialists and Waterwise Approved symbol and save!



Waterwise Specialists have been trained to help you save water in and around your home by providing specialist advice and services to reduce your water use. They include Garden Designers, Garden Centres, Garden Irrigators, Irrigation Design Shops, Landscapers, Lawnmowing Contractors, Plumbers and Water Auditors.



Look for the Waterwise Approved symbol on products that have been endorsed by the Water Corporation to help you save water outside the home, such as mulch, plants, greywater systems and irrigation systems.

You will also find the Waterwise Approved symbol on endorsed Waterwise Display Villages and Land Developments.

To find your nearest Waterwise Specialist or for more information about Waterwise Approved products, display villages and land developments visit [watercorporation.com.au](http://watercorporation.com.au)



## Households use over 50% of their total water inside the home.

Making simple changes to your water use behaviour can save lots of water. If we all reduced the amount of water we use by even a small amount, we could make a huge difference to our total consumption.

There are some practical ways to save water in your home, without affecting your lifestyle.

### taking showers

Showers and baths account for 25% of all water used in an average home.

Limit your showers to 4 minutes or less, this is plenty of time to get clean. A shorter shower can save up to 12 litres a minute.

Shower timers are a great way to remind you to limit shower times.

Install a low flow, water efficient showerhead (WELS rated 3 star or above) and save up to 3 litres of water a minute.

Don't waste water while you wait for the hot tap to warm up. Keep a bucket handy to catch the water and use it on indoor plants or in the garden.

### did you know?

In an average home of 3 people who take 6 minute showers, if each person reduces their shower time by 2 minutes, down to 4 minutes, they would save up to 72 litres of water each day.

### brushing your teeth

Don't leave the tap running while you brush your teeth. Simply wet your toothbrush before you begin and use a glass of water to rinse your mouth. This can save around 35 litres per person per day.

### toilets

The toilet uses 9% of all water used in an average home. Installing a dual flush toilet system can help your household use up to 75% less water every time you flush.

### did you know?

You can save up to 90 litres of water every day by replacing a single flush toilet with a dual flush system.

Single flush toilets use up to 11 litres per flush, while dual flush toilets use as little as 3 litres per flush. If you are replacing the toilet replace the whole suite (the pan and cistern) and choose a WELS rated 4 star model, which uses 3 litres for a half flush and 4.5 litres for a full flush.

Avoid flushing household rubbish down the toilet and put it in the bin instead. This will help save water as well as reducing problems with the wastewater system.



## leaking toilets

A leaking toilet is the most common leak and can waste up to 25 litres a day. To check your cistern, place a few drops of food colouring in the tank. Without flushing it, look for colouring in the toilet bowl. If it is getting through, you have a leak and it is time to call a Licensed Waterwise Plumber.

## check for hidden leaks

Fixing a small leak can save up to 30 litres of water per day. Fixing a large leak can save thousands of litres of water being wasted.

Check for worn washers and repair leaking pipes.

## how to check for leaks

1. Ensure no water is being used in your house (turn off all water appliances, such as washing machines and dishwashers).
2. Record your water use at the meter last thing at night.
3. The next day, record your water use first thing in the morning.
4. If a lot of water is used overnight, investigate further.
5. Repeat for a week to see if there is a pattern.

If you suspect a leak and are unsure of how to proceed call **13 10 39**. If you detect a leak, visit [watercorporation.com.au](http://watercorporation.com.au) to find your nearest Waterwise Specialist.

## taps and water pressure

Choosing waterwise products, making some small changes to the water pressure and your own habits when using taps around your home can make a difference to your total water use.

When buying a new bathroom tap choose at least a WELS rated 6 star model, for kitchen and laundry taps a minimum WELS rated 4 star model is recommended.

Save water with single lever mixer taps. The lever action mixes hot and cold water and allows you to find the right water temperature quickly.

A flow regulator can help reduce water use by up to 50% by allowing water to flow at predetermined rates, while also providing softer water with less splashing.

High water pressure increases flow rates from showers and taps. A Licensed Waterwise Plumber can fit a pressure reduction valve at your property boundary.

Don't let the tap run while rinsing dishes or washing fruit and vegetables, use a plug instead.

Keep a jug of water in the fridge. This will mean you always have cold water on hand and will not waste water while waiting for cold water out of the tap.



## washing machines

Washing machines account for 7% of all water used in an average home. An easy way to save water is to only put on your washing machine when you have a full load.

### did you know?

Reducing your washing by just one load a week will save up to 120 litres.

When buying a new washing machine choose the highest WELS rating possible. A WELS rated 4 star model uses up to 41% less water than a conventional washing machine.

In general, front loading washing machines are more water efficient than top loaders. Over a year, front loaders use around 3,000 litres less than top loaders.

## dishwashers

Only use your dishwasher when it is full.

When buying a new dishwasher, choose at least a WELS rated 4.5 star model, which uses as little as 15 litres per wash, compared to older models which use around 20 litres per wash.

## evaporative air conditioners

Evaporative air conditioners work by using cooling pads saturated with water to lower air temperature, but there are some simple ways to reduce the amount of water used to cool your home.

- Turn to 'fan only' at night or during high humidity periods.
- Familiarise yourself with your air conditioner's optimal tap settings. You can find this by asking your air conditioner manufacturer.
- Install flow controllers to reduce water wastage in systems.
- Regularly check for leaks, maintain flow control and clean the filter pads.

## building and renovating

Incorporate water efficient principles into your home design right from the start. As well as saving water, a waterwise home design will also help reduce household energy bills.

For great water saving ideas which will save you money in the long run, visit a Waterwise Display Village. To find one near you visit our website.



# outside the home

Over 40% of all household water is used in your garden.

There are many ways you can plan and maintain your garden so that it will need less water and still be thriving, attractive and colourful.

## watering and irrigation

Know your rostered watering day/s and stick to the rules.

Rosters are set with climatic conditions in mind and can change from season to season depending on factors like rainfall and water flow into our dams. It is important that you find out what your roster is, know the rules and stick to both.

From time to time parts of the State will experience unusually dry periods, which may result in changes to watering rosters. Make sure you are aware of such changes by keeping an eye on the media or checking our website.

To find your watering days visit our website and click on 'Watering Days', then simply input your postcode and street number.

### Don't forget:

- You can only water **once** on your rostered watering day/s, **either before 9am or after 6pm**. Early in the morning is best to help reduce waste from evaporation and wind drift.
- Any maintenance to your irrigation system (i.e. checking sprinklers) must be done on your rostered watering day.
- A **permanent winter sprinkler ban** applies to Perth, Mandurah and some parts of the south-west between 1 June and 31 August each year.

## watering tips

- Do not overwater on your rostered day/s. It's actually a waste. Water just enough to penetrate the top 30cm of soil, where the feeder roots are. Different types of sprinklers have different watering rates. To find out the recommended watering times for your irrigation system go to [watercorporation.com.au](http://watercorporation.com.au)
- Water in the morning to help reduce waste from evaporation and wind drift. Watering early allows the water to soak into the root zone and be available to the plant throughout the day when they need it most.
- It's easy to 'set and forget' your irrigation, so it is important to regularly check that the system is working correctly. If your controller has a back up battery it is important to replace it every year to prevent loss of programming in a power outage. Not sure how to program your controller? The manuals for many irrigation controllers are available from our website.
- Replace worn nozzles and broken seals to make sure you are not wasting water. Also check that you are watering the garden and not the road!
- Make sure your irrigation system is waterwise. A waterwise irrigation system will help you save water and money. To find out more contact a Waterwise Garden Irrigator or visit your nearest Waterwise Irrigation Design Shop.
- Turn off your irrigation system if rain is forecast on your watering day or install a rain sensor. It will prevent your automatic irrigation system from watering unnecessarily either during or soon after rain.
- If you are hand watering, water as close to the roots as possible – where the plant can use it.
- Install a tap timer. A tap timer will help you to control the amount of water applied to your lawn or garden.
- Install a garden bore. A major incentive is that you can save on water costs and qualify for additional watering day/s. Check out the Garden Bores section later in this brochure.



## did you know?

Reducing irrigation time by just one minute across all stations can save around 130 litres of water on your watering day.\*

## turn off your irrigation system in winter

**A permanent winter sprinkler ban applies to Perth, Mandurah and some parts of the south-west between 1 June and 31 August each year.**

Wherever you live in WA, during the cooler winter months lawns and many plants are dormant so they need very little water. Usually the rainfall received in winter is enough and any more will just promote weed growth.

## one drink in autumn and spring

During autumn and spring your garden only needs to be watered once a week. With cooler nights, morning dew and low evaporation, your garden will retain the moisture it needs.

## make your verge waterwise

Replace surplus lawn – you will save time and money on watering, fertilising, mowing and weeding. A verge planted with waterwise plants or a waterwise ground cover is not that difficult or expensive to do!

Remember to consult your local council regarding height restrictions and other verge treatment guidelines.

\*For fixed spray pop-up sprinklers.



## mulch your garden

A good waterwise mulch can significantly reduce evaporation, so that our precious water isn't wasted. For mulch to be truly effective, you have to apply it to a depth of 5 – 10cm.

Mulch before summer and top it up periodically to maintain sufficient mulch levels across your garden.

It will protect your soil, reduce weeds, reduce plant stress and will break down over time to feed your soil. What's more – it improves the appearance of your garden.

Make sure you use a good waterwise mulch. A good waterwise mulch should have large, chunky particles. Look for mulch with the Water Corporation's Waterwise Approved symbol.

## improve your soil

WA's sandy soils are hard to grow plants in and quickly become non-wettable during hot dry weather. Improve your soil's health and water storage capacity with organic or mineral soil improvers at every opportunity.

The easiest time to improve soil is at planting, when it can be thoroughly mixed with the top 30cm of soil. Planting in autumn is best to help your plants establish in the cooler months. You can also apply a soil improver from the top to an established garden, just spread a layer of compost and then cover it with a layer of waterwise mulch. You can often find soil improvers that also contain wetting agents, which help water penetrate to the roots of your plants.

For more information check out the *Water Saving Ideas – Soil Improvement* brochure on our website.

## choose waterwise plants

Choose waterwise plants for your garden. They are perfectly adapted to our climate and require a lot less water. Visit our Waterwise Plants for WA database at [watercorporation.com.au](http://watercorporation.com.au) to find plants best suited to your region.

Be sure to only plant new plants when you know they have a good chance of survival. Autumn is the best time to plant, when new plants can establish with cooler days, morning dew and low evaporation.

We have a range of brochures available to help you create different styles of waterwise gardens. Visit our website to find one that suits you.

A Waterwise Landscaper can help plan, prepare and plant a water efficient garden that uses less water and saves you time and money. Visit our website or call **13 10 39** to find a Waterwise Landscaper near you.

## choose a drought tolerant lawn

When planting new lawn, choose a low water user variety that is heat and drought tolerant. Warm season grasses such as Couch, Buffalo, Zoysia or Kikuyu respond well to our hot summers.

Give your new lawn the best start by avoiding planting in the heat of summer. It is best to lay lawn in the cooler months so that it can get established, and needs less watering than in the hotter months.



## use a pool cover

Using a pool cover keeps your pool warmer and cleaner and reduces evaporation. It will also reduce the amount of expensive chemicals you may need to add to your pool.

### did you know?

Putting a pool cover on your pool can help save around 55 litres of water a day.

## washing the car

Use a bucket of water when you are cleaning your car. By washing your car on the lawn you will be giving your lawn a nutrient boost, as car shampoos use phosphates, which can work like a fertiliser.

## hand watering

Get a trigger nozzle for your hose or use a watering can. Apply water only where it is required so that it reaches the root zone of the plants being watered.

### did you know?

A running hose can waste up to 20 litres of water a minute.

## use a broom

If you need to clean driveways or paved areas use a broom. Using a hose is a fast way to waste water and can attract a fine.

## alternative water sources

### garden bores

With over 40% of your water used in your garden, you could save precious drinking water by installing a garden bore. Why not share a bore with your neighbour? You can share the cost of installing the bore and save money and water.

Garden bores draw water from shallow groundwater aquifers and are generally a better alternative to scheme water for use on gardens, as they reduce the need to use our precious drinking water for irrigating gardens and lawns.

To find out if a bore is suitable for your garden consult the Department of Water's *Groundwater Atlas for Perth* at [water.wa.gov.au](http://water.wa.gov.au)

### rainwater tanks

The average 2,000 litre capacity rainwater tank can save up to 26,000 litres of water each year. These water savings could be significantly increased (up to 59,000 litres) if the tank is plumbed in for internal uses such as clothes washing or toilet flushing.

### greywater re-use systems

A greywater system can help you save water by irrigating your garden with water from the bath, shower or washing machine. For more information about greywater re-use systems contact your local council or the Water Unit at the Department of Health.