



Birregurra Sustainable Communities Water Update



Spotlight on WELS

Did you know that you can save money on your water and energy bills by choosing more water efficient products?

The Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) scheme is a mandatory national government scheme to help people save water in their homes. Water consuming products such as taps, toilets, showerheads, dishwashers and washing machines must be tested and are then given a rating score to indicate the product's water efficiency – between 1 and 6 Stars.

Households and businesses are now saving over \$1 billion a year on utility bills as a result of the WELS scheme. Over the last decade the WELS rating of water consuming products has increased significantly. Low flow taps are a great way to save on water bills. For example, a 3-Star tap that uses 9 litres of water per minute will save 11 kilolitres of water and around \$24 per tap on water bills each year. By upgrading to a 6-Star tap that uses four litres of water per minute, you will save 20 kilolitres of water and around \$45 per tap on water bills each year! Installing tap aerators can reduce drinking water use to as little as 2 litres per minute.

Improving the WELS rating of your household water fixtures and fittings is definitely worth it!

When purchasing water consuming products, look for the water rating label or written advice on all products. The label is designed to help you make informed choices about the water efficiency of products you are buying.

Water efficient showerheads

As part of the Birregurra Sustainable Communities – Water program, Barwon Water has a limited number of ultra-efficient showerheads (5-Star WELS rating) available for Birregurra customers that can be installed by our contract plumber for free. A group of Birregurra customers tested these showerheads last year and found that the water efficient showerhead used only five litres per minute, compared to their existing showerhead that used between 9-10 litres per minute. Just by changing their showerheads over, it automatically reduced their shower water use by almost half. If you would like to trial these new 5-Star WELS rated showerheads in your home, please reach out to our Sustainable Water Use team on 1300 656 007 or info@barwonwater.vic.gov.au.

Water saving tip – dishwashers

We use water every day in the kitchen for cooking, cleaning, washing and drinking. Dishwashers are usually the highest consumer of water in the kitchen. To save water, make sure you only use your dishwasher when you have a full load, use the short wash cycles for everything but the dirtiest of dishes and use an air-dry setting if you have one, or simply turn the dishwasher off after its final rinse and open the door. For more information about saving water in the kitchen visit www.smartwatermark.org/smartwateradvice/saving-water-home/kitchen/.

And remember if you're looking to upgrade your kitchen appliances to be more water efficient, the WELS rating scheme can help you choose, the more Stars the more efficient the product www.waterrating.gov.au/choose.

For further details on the Birregurra Sustainable Communities – Water program and our Living Laboratory project, visit www.yoursay.barwonwater.vic.gov.au/birregurra.

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