

# CONSTRUCTION

Water conservation can be incorporated at every stage of your construction project, from design, to planning and construction itself.



### The design phase

The most cost effective way to deliver water efficiency is by incorporating water saving principles into all aspects of your project from inception.

- Prepare a Water Efficiency Management Plan (WEMP) for your project that includes actions during construction, appliances and plumbing to be installed, reuse potential, landscaping and rainwater utilisation.
- Ensure water conservation and the protection of water quality is included in all tender and contractual documentation.
- Stay up to-date with the latest opportunities for water conservation design and appliances.
- If you're designing a greenfield site, try to use natural drainage swales instead of costly concrete drainage pipes. Install drainage systems that allow the polluted 'first flush' to be diverted into trade waste and the clean water that follows to flow into tanks, pond systems or drainage swales.

### Involve people

- Establish water conservation as a key objective of the project and ensure everyone involved in the project is aware of their responsibilities.

- Provide induction training for new employees and contractors so they are also aware of their responsibilities and the benefits of the program.
- Keep the WEMP on site and ensure that all employees are aware and have access to it.
- Discuss water management at regular meetings.
- Keep track of ongoing achievements.
- Promote your successes with press releases to local media and industry associations.



## What to do on site

- Reduce evaporation by retaining as much vegetation as possible during construction.
- Install water efficient irrigation systems.
- Require workers to use a broom rather than a hose to clean paths and gutters.
- To clean tools use buckets of water instead of running water.
- Under water restrictions there is no hosing of hard surfaces such as paths, driveways, concrete and other paved areas, except when cleaning with water is necessary for construction activity, surface discolouration, reasons of safety, health, or emergency. These should be readily identifiable to an authorised officer and remember all hand held hoses must have a trigger nozzle. Examples of when you may hose a path, driveway, concrete and other paved surface during construction include:
  - preparing a surface for painting or resealing
  - cleaning surfaces before selling or leasing a property
  - rinsing surfaces after construction activity provided the area is initially cleaned using a shovel and broom.

## Protect water quality

- Minimise disturbance of waterways, flood plains, vegetation and soil.
- Plan your activities so nothing from your site, such as soil, sand and cement slurry, will go down the gutter or drain and directly pollute the stormwater system, local creeks and rivers.
- Ensure cement works are not carried out on roads or paths so you avoid the need to wash the slurry away with water.
- Fence the site with temporary fencing (hording) and line it with hay bales. Geotextile silt fencing can also be used.
- Install and maintain erosion and sediment control devices. These devices can reduce water velocities on site by redirecting runoff at regular intervals with bales, contours, baffles, and mounds or by retaining vegetation.
- Cover or filter stormwater inlets and drains.
- Regularly clean and maintain all stormwater protection devices.
- Avoid the use of building materials such as asbestos or PVC, that will pollute water.
- Stockpile and cover building materials away from drains or roads.

## Saving water in business

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