

South East Water

Water Conservation Report 2007/08



# We love water.

Drinking it,  
bathing in it,  
growing our gardens  
and businesses with it.

Australians are among the biggest users of water in the world, especially around the home.

We are learning to respect water. Australia's rainfall is the lowest of the continents (excluding Antarctica). Like it or not, drought is a part of Australian life.

Our Water Conservation Plan 2007/08 demonstrates our progress in finding innovative ways of doing more with less.

# Executive Summary

Our efforts to save water are working. SE Water's total water consumption in 2007/08 was 133,652 megalitres (ML), 6.4% less than last year. We also exceeded our 2007/08 forecast targets for per capita water reduction.

Our 2007/08 Water Conservation Plan describes a number of programs to achieve water savings in the residential and non-residential sector. The development, delivery and evaluation of our Plan is overseen by our Water Conservation Standing Committee. This Water Conservation Report provides a summary of the performance of the programs implemented under our Water Conservation Plan.

While the presence of Stage 3a water restrictions<sup>1</sup> has played a significant role in reducing water consumption, our activities in 2007/08 have helped to achieve sustained water savings of 2,533 ML.

## Read more:

- **Water consumption in 2007/08**
  - By Sector
  - Per Capita
- **Our progress - doing more with less**
- **Our Water Conservation Programs**
  - Non-Revenue Programs
  - Residential Programs
  - Non-residential Programs
  - Other Programs
- **Water Conservation Governance**

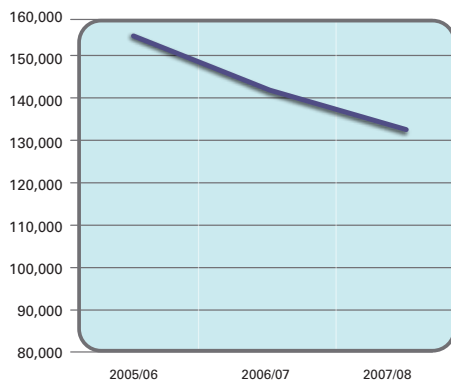
# Water Consumption in 2007/08

## By Sector

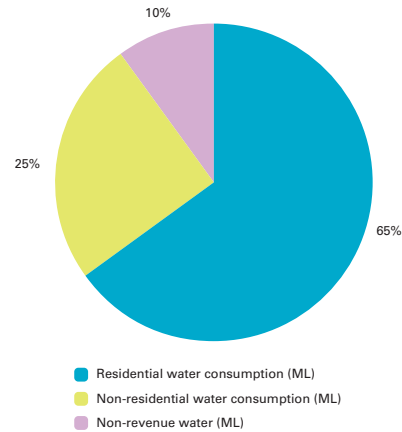
Our efforts to save water are working. SE Water's total water consumption in 2007/08 was 133,652 ML, 6.4% less than last year (see Figure 1).

The majority of our water use was in our homes, with a quarter used by businesses and about 10 per cent lost as leakage (see Figure 2). All sectors reduced their consumption over the year.

**Figure 1 Total water purchased by South East Water (ML pa)**



**Figure 2 Water consumption by sector**

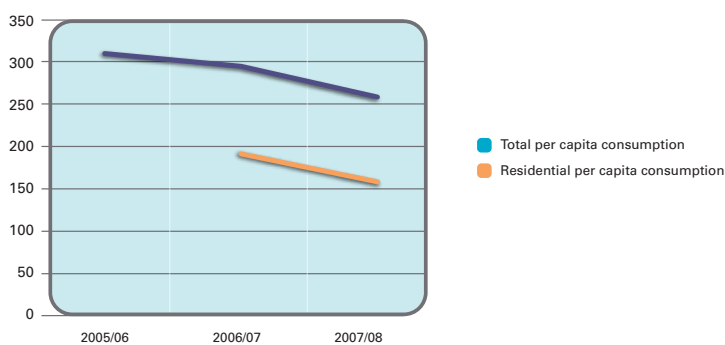


## Per capita

We exceeded our 2007/08 forecast targets for per capita water reduction (see Figure 3):

- Total per capita water consumption in our region was 258 litres/person/day, 14.8% lower than target figures from the Central Region Sustainable Water Strategy (2006);
- Residential per capita consumption was 168 litres person/day, 12.5% lower than target.

**Figure 3 Per capita water use**



## Residential water consumption

Our Water Wise calculator helps household estimate their current water usage and charges. Read more at [www.southeastwater.com.au/watercalculator](http://www.southeastwater.com.au/watercalculator)

## Non-residential water consumption

We have developed Water Saving Guides for bricklayers, concrete cutters, concreters, hotels / motels, pubs, landscapers and painters. Read more at [www.southeastwater.com.au/solutionsfor/business/howcanwehelp/Pages/Watermanagementtips.aspx](http://www.southeastwater.com.au/solutionsfor/business/howcanwehelp/Pages/Watermanagementtips.aspx)

## Non-revenue water

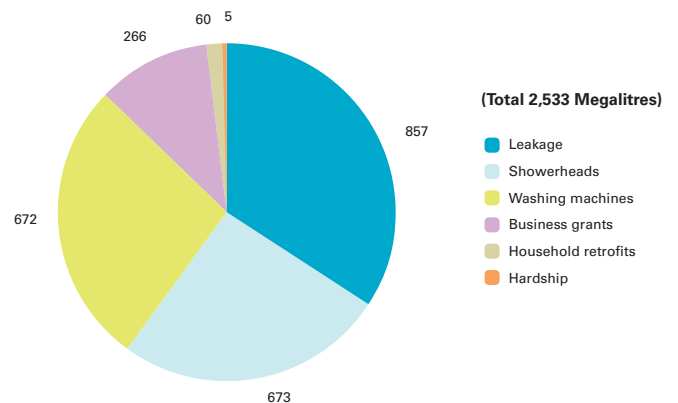
Help us prevent contamination of our precious water supply. Read more about how to maintain your fire service. Read more at [www.southeastwater.com.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/Property%20development/maintain\\_fire\\_service.pdf](http://www.southeastwater.com.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/Property%20development/maintain_fire_service.pdf)

# Our progress - doing more with less

The presence of Stage 3a water restrictions<sup>2</sup> throughout 2007/08 played a significant role in reducing water consumption compared to last year.

However, the water conservation actions implemented during 2007/08 have helped to achieve sustained water savings of 2,533 ML (see Figure 4). Our focus on incentives and products for business and households to install water saving hardware will provide long-term water savings. These actions will help minimise any 'bounce-back' in water consumption if restrictions are lifted.

**Figure 4 Actual water savings to 30 June 2008 (Total 2,533 ML)**



## Our Water Conservation Programs

Our 2007/08 Water Conservation Plan describes a number of programs to achieve water savings in the non-revenue, residential and non-residential sector. Areas include:

- Non-revenue - Leakage and Fire Services
- Residential - showerhead replacement, household assessment hardship program and communications; and
- Non-residential - business grants and rebates, cooling towers, commercial water audits, data loggers for schools, communications, Council Challenge.

### Non-revenue Programs

#### Leakage

Our Active Leakage program assessed 2,993 km of water mains this year, nearly a third of our total network. We identified 629 leaks and saved an estimated 857 ML/year.

#### Fire Services

This program aims to reduce current un-metered fire services water consumption (around 500 ML/yr across Melbourne) in the non-revenue water sector.

We are working with our customers to understand their current fire service systems, identify wastage patterns and, where required, assisting them to upgrade their systems in accordance with Australian Standards. We are also working in partnership with others in the fire services industry to promote a uniform approach to monthly testing and recirculation systems.

### Residential Programs

#### Showerhead Replacement

We exchange our residential customer's inefficient showerheads with more efficient models, saving around 12 kL/yr per household. This year we exchanged 56,077 showerheads, saving almost 673 ML. Since 2006 we have made 83,073 exchanges, exceeding our target of 82,000!

Knox residents saved nearly 133 million litres of water in 2007/08, equivalent to 53 Olympic-size swimming pools, through the showerhead exchange program. Knox is a terrific example of a council that has encouraged its residents to exchange their old model for a three star water efficient showerhead.

## Household Assessments

We completed 3,188 Household Water Audits, saving around 60 ML through the 'Home Waterwise Makeover' program.

Targeted customers were invited to participate at the cost of \$80 with a \$50 rebate on their water bill. We found that only 20% of homes participating in the audit already had a water efficient showerhead, while dual flush toilets were a lot more popular - 81% of audit participants already had one of these.

## Hardship Program

To date, 227 customers have been assisted through our hardship program with water audits and retrofits of water efficient appliances being completed. Works completed under a retrofit may include:

- Replacement of washers on leaking taps.
- Installation of flow control valves or aerators to reduce flows.
- Installation of AAA rated shower rose.
- Replacement of one single-flush toilet with one dual-flush toilet (cistern only).
- Minor adjustments to hot water service.

## Communications

Our new 'Diversity @ South East Water' program was introduced to support our strategic focus on engaging with our community. We are now developing a cultural communication program to increase collaborative partnerships with community service organisations and directly with the community. For example, we are partnering with Environment Victoria and the Centre for Multicultural Youth to deliver the Multicultural Leaders in Sustainability (MLS) initiative. About twenty young people (aged eighteen to twenty-five) are recruited each year from migrant and refugee backgrounds to train and work as sustainability leaders in the South East Water geographical service area. We contribute to the program through the design of water sessions and activities, the provision of products, venues and staff to support training in water sustainability and financial support.

You may have seen our water saving advertisements in the Leader newspapers in SE Water's catchment area during January & February 2008. You can view our easy water saving habits online at:

[www.southeastwater.com.au/solutionsfor/residents/savewater/Pages/EasyHabits.aspx](http://www.southeastwater.com.au/solutionsfor/residents/savewater/Pages/EasyHabits.aspx)

## Non-Residential Programs

### Business Water Grants and Rebates

We provide financial incentives to our waterMAP customers (business using greater than 10 ML/year) to fund water saving projects. Two funding rounds were completed this year, saving 266 ML through the implementation of 15 projects. We also offered rebates to non-residential customers using over 5 ML/year for a variety of water-saving products and services.

### Cooling Towers

Victoria's Department of Sustainability and Environment (DSE) funded 50 cooling tower audits across the State this year to determine the potential for water savings. We are supporting the DSE initiative by offering free check meters to businesses. These meters will help assess the 1,300 cooling towers in SE Water's area.

Princes Laundry Services Braeside plant has become a national leader for saving water within its industry, saving up to 42% of potable water on site. The installation of a water aquamiser / energy optimiser system has cut its water use from 21.2 litres of water per kg of laundry to 12.31 litres.

## Commercial Water Audits

We provide commercial water audits to encourage large water users to identify and implement water saving recommendations. In 2007/08 we worked with the following customers:

- VACC
- Holmesglen (Moorabbin)
- Dandenong Oasis
- Bayview on the Park
- Balmoral Gardens Village
- Brotherhood of St Lawrence (GK tucker Settlement)
- Springvale Shopping Centre
- Amaroo Gardens
- Melbourne Business School
- Crest on Barkly
- Paisley Ridge
- Centro Cranbourne
- Fountain Gate Shopping Centre (food courts)
- Australian Taxation Office
- South Pacific St Kilda (St Kilda Baths)
- IBM Global Services

SE Water Priority Plumbing retrofitted The Arts Centre and the Pacific International Hotel.

## Data Loggers for Schools

We have installed our 'Hydroshare' technology in 16 local schools to help them:

- Identify leaks;
- Monitor the results of water-saving activities;
- Reduce waste; and
- Educate students and teachers about water use.

Read more about our Schools Water Efficiency Program online at [www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/saving/schools/swep](http://www.ourwater.vic.gov.au/saving/schools/swep)

## Communications

We have provided 3,585 posters and 33,021 stickers to our business customers to encourage water conservation.

Our first 'Aquabiz' newsletter was released in April 2008. The quarterly newsletter will provide a regular news and information update for waterMAP customers, raise the profile of water efficiency projects, provide best practice information and promote the programs and services available to these customers. You can download a pdf version of Aquabiz online at [www.southeastwater.com.au/solutionsfor/business/waterMAP/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.southeastwater.com.au/solutionsfor/business/waterMAP/Pages/default.aspx)

## Council Challenge

Four councils shared prizes in our second annual Council Water Challenge. The Challenge is open to each of the 15 councils in the SE Water area. Prize winners received a combination of financial and in-kind service support from SE Water.

## Corporate Category

- 1st Prize - City of Kingston - water saving initiatives at the Waves Leisure Centre saved approximately 21 million litres of water per year;
- 2nd Prize - City of Stonnington - the installation of various water-saving fixtures and the implementation of 'Prahran Market Management Plan' saved 16 million litres of water per year;
- 3rd Prize - Knox City Council - their Civic Centre upgrade saved approximately 2 million litres of water per year.

## Community Category

- Winner - Frankston City Council - their community education program saved an estimated 38 million litres of water per year.

## Other Programs

### Watersmart

Watersmart is a collaborative project between Department of Sustainability and Environment, the three metropolitan water retailers and three regional retailers. Together, we aim to reduce householder water consumption through a 12-month direct marketing behaviour change program.

The SE Water program will target 40,000 households and has been designed to align with our other water conservation activities.

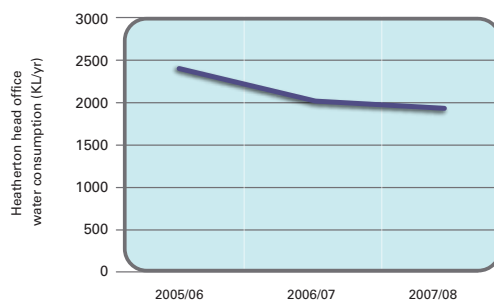
### Residential High Water Users

We contact our high water-using residential customers and visit them at home to discuss water saving options.

### SE Water Eco-office Program

Our Eco-Office program shows our staff how day-to-day decisions like composting, using recycled paper and turning lights and computers off have an important and positive impact on the environment. We have improved our own water efficiency by introducing the simple devices and behavioural strategies that we recommend for our customers.

Figure 5 SE Water Eco-office Program



### Water Conservation Governance

South East Water's 2007/08 Water Conservation Plan describes a number of programs to achieve water savings in the residential and non-residential sector. Our Water Conservation Standing Committee oversees the development, delivery and evaluation of our Plan. They also provide leadership and direction for our involvement in cross sectoral/catchment-wide programs, ensure that cost effective water conservation programs are effectively managed, and that potable water consumption reduction targets are met.

To find out more about our approach to water conservation, visit:  
[www.southeastwater.com.au/Extras/Contact/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.southeastwater.com.au/Extras/Contact/Pages/default.aspx)



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