

Knox Leading the Way

Knox City Council has delivered a number of projects over the past year that address water efficiencies in Council properties and help residents and businesses save water.

With the help of South East Water, Knox City Council has been running a Showerhead Exchange Program where residents bring in their inefficient showerhead and exchange it for a AAA-rated water-efficient one. It has been a resounding success, with Knox residents exchanging more than 8,000 showerheads which is more than any other Council participating in the program. This program alone saves the community 138 million litres of water a year, equivalent to 55 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Council also manages 42 major sporting reserves and it is a delicate balancing act to use water responsibly, while meeting the needs of a community desperate to keep its much-loved parks and sporting grounds green. Knox City Council recently hosted a water forum for local sporting clubs on how to preserve playing surfaces while balancing the need to save water.

One way that Knox City Council will help keep ovals green is a water reuse initiative that will take backwash water previously used to clean filters at the Knox Leisureworks swimming pool in Boronia and pump it to specialised underground water tanks at nearby Tormore Reserve. This water will then be treated and used for irrigation, saving 13 million litres of water a year while effectively drought-proofing one of Knox's premier reserves.

Knox City Council is exploring similar projects for Carrington Park in Scoresby, Rowville Recreation Reserve, Batterham Reserve in the Basin and Knox Gardens Reserve, using stormwater from the roofs of surrounding businesses and factories, including a project with AMCOR (see pg. 5).

Other initiatives include:

- Running a series of workshops for residents, schools and business operators to help them embrace sustainability in their everyday operations. Known as 'GreenLeaf', it has been given a big thumbs up from the community and business with hundreds of people participating
- Planting warm season grasses at local sporting grounds which require far less water
- Reviewing new building applications and suggesting/enforcing ways new developments can include Water Sensitive Urban Design
- Hosting seminars and information stalls promoting water saving and sustainability in all walks of life
- Installing water tanks at local sporting pavilions and preschools with captured water used for toilets



Knox Mayor Jim Penna and South East Water Local Government Manager Mark Chicoine celebrate the success of the showerhead exchange program

As the drought continues and with no end to water restrictions in sight, Knox City Council will continue its concerted effort to form partnerships with the community and South East Water to explore new water-saving methods. It is this community-wide approach that is helping Knox City Council maintain its standing as one of Melbourne's leading, most innovative water saving councils.