

MEDIA RELEASE

Saving water saves you money

Immediate Release

8 January 2010

Many Melburnians are thinking of ways to cut costs and save money after the Christmas splurge; using less water is another great way to save money by lowering your water bill.

Hot weather and summer school holidays see many families significantly increase their water usage, and some may be surprised at the size of their water bill when it arrives in April or May.

Murray Goddard, South East Water's General Manager – Customer and Community, said: "South East Water operates under a tiered pricing structure meaning the more water you use, the more you pay."

"We all need to use water more wisely this summer otherwise it could mean a greater hit to the hip pocket than expected," Mr Goddard said.

The average water bill for Melburnians is still lower than in other capital cities.

An average family of four might use 675 litres of water a day, which would be charged at the second tier water usage tariff of \$1.55 per kilolitre. If families increase their usage to an average of 880 litres per day they will be charged the third tier water usage tariff of \$2.43 per kilolitre.

South East Water has a variety of products and services to help customers monitor and reduce their water use, including the free online water tracker, available from the website, which makes it easy for customers to calculate how much water they are using.

Following the water saving messages of Target 155, which encourages all Melburnians to use no more than 155 litres of water each day, will help families keep their water costs out of the higher usage tariffs.

"To help ease the financial burden, we have a range of payment options available for customers experiencing difficulties. The Hardship Relief Fund can provide additional assistance for some customers," Mr Goddard said.

South East Water offers a toilet replacement program giving customers the opportunity to replace a single-flush toilet with a dual-flush version that comes with water savings of up to 35,000 litres a year.

Households can also replace their inefficient showerhead with a free water-saving showerhead from South East Water.

Customers can claim rebates on eligible water-saving products up until June 2011 under the Water Smart Gardens and Homes Rebate Scheme, which is part of the *Our Water Our Future* initiative. This includes the purchase of three-star water efficient showerheads, garden products, rainwater tanks, systems for reusing household waste water and upgrading to eligible dual flush toilets.

Visit www.southeastwater.com.au for more information on water saving initiatives, rebate schemes and payment assistance or call the Customer Contact Centre on 131 694.

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Media Enquiries

Zoe Malone
Tel: 9552 3226
Mob: 0457 551 337