

Rapid Review of Victoria's permanent water saving rules

December 2025



We acknowledge and respect Victorian Traditional Owners as the original custodians of Victoria's land and waters, their unique ability to care for Country and deep spiritual connection to it.

We honour Elders past and present whose knowledge and wisdom has ensured the continuation of culture and traditional practices.

DEECA is committed to genuinely partnering with Victorian Traditional Owners and Victoria's Aboriginal community to progress their aspirations.



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Introduction

Review context and purpose

Uniform, statewide PWSRs were first developed in 2005 and were varied following a comprehensive review of the water restrictions framework in 2011, which aimed to embed learnings from the Millenium Drought.

The rules are written into each urban water corporation's Permanent Water Saving Plan (PWS Plan), which are the legislative instruments used to implement, and provide exemptions to, the PWSRs.

In 2021, DEECA led a review (Review) of the Water Restrictions By-laws (water restrictions) and PWSRs in partnership with VicWater and the water corporations. The outcome of the Review was that PWSRs remained sound and fit-for-purpose. For this reason, the PWSRs were not proposed to be varied nor subject to further analysis and did not form part of the review's public consultation or other stakeholder engagement.

Many areas of Victoria have recently been subject to extremely dry conditions and declining water storage levels. These drying conditions have led to a renewed focus by government on increasing water efficiency, in particular through increasing awareness and compliance with the state's PWSRs.

The Minister for Water requested a rapid review of the PWSRs to ensure they are fit for purpose, and to identify any ways to increase awareness/understanding of the PWSRs prior to summer 2025-26.

Increasing awareness of the PWSRs will help to encourage Victorians to use water more efficiently. It is also expected to improve compliance with the rules.

Methodology for this Review

The steps undertaken as part of this rapid review include:

- An analysis and comparison of PWSRs in other Australian states
- Consultation with all Victorian urban water corporations
- Analysis of available data on awareness of the PWSRs

Review Outcomes

Review Findings

Awareness

The review found that low public awareness and understanding of Victoria's Permanent Water Saving Rules (PWSRs) is likely the biggest barrier to effective implementation.

Customer survey data from water corporations suggests that awareness of the PWSRs in many areas of the state has declined significantly over the last 10 years, varies by region, and is lower in younger Victorians. Water efficiency in general is considered important but not front-of-mind when water isn't seen as scarce.

Permanent Water Saving Rule communications and messages are inconsistent between Victorian water corporations, potentially contributing to variations in awareness and understanding among customers.

The uptake and effectiveness of our PWSRs is expected to increase with increased and enhanced promotion and improved communication. It is recommended that following the 2025-26 summer period, a follow-up with water corporations is conducted to review the estimated impact of PWSR communication changes.

Appropriateness

The rules address the main opportunities for everyday savings outside the home. The PWSRs are consistent with other jurisdictions and considered fit-for-purpose by the water industry.

There were no gaps in the PWSRs, or new rules identified that could be easily adopted in Victoria based on the comparative analysis of equivalent rules in place in other Australian jurisdictions.

The analysis of PWSRs in some other jurisdictions identified one rule for further analysis of risks and costs: the requirement to use pool covers. Pool covers are expected to save a household with a pool (not using a cover) significant water in summer (~100 Litres/day¹) and, for those with heated pools, energy in winter too. However, there are significant costs and potential safety risks associated with pool covers. Further work is needed to understand the impacts of such a rule.

Therefore, no immediate changes to the PWSRs are proposed, however several improvements in clarity and communication were identified that can be implemented ahead of summer to improve compliance.

Review Recommendations

Action 1: Improve communication of the PWSRs

- Use consistent, simplified and accessible messaging focussing on the three main rules.
- Improve clarity of messaging around car washing.
- Express the PWSRs in a way that shows that they are *rules* and not *guidelines*.
- DEECA to lead the development of new standardised messaging for all urban water corporation websites, including Frequently Asked Questions.
- DEECA to fund, and Yarra Valley Water to lead, the development of new PWSR communications in consultation with all urban water corporations.

Action 2: Increase promotion through social media content and a PWSR video.

- All urban water corporations to update their websites with the improved wording by early January 2026.
- DEECA to distribute template PWSR social media, bill inserts, flyer and PWSR video to urban water corporations by end December 2025.
- All urban water corporations to adopt the new PWSR communications material during and following Summer 2025-26.

¹ <https://www.spasa.com.au/pool-and-spa-owners/faqs-tips-and-tricks/pool-water-savings-techniques>

Action 3: Reassess Effectiveness

- DEECA to re-convene water industry discussions 6 months after releasing the Review to determine how effective the changes to communications and additional promotion have been and if any other barriers to implementation of PWSRs have changed or emerged.
- DEECA to seek feedback from the water corporations on the success of the revised PWSR communications material and the additional promotion (in raising awareness of the PWSRs over summer 2025-26). This will inform the development of future PWSR communication materials and campaigns.
- Urban water corporations to provide feedback and any relevant data on customer awareness to DEECA, including if they think there are other barriers to effective implementation of PWSRs across the state.
- DEECA to undertake further analysis, and consult with the water industry, on the risks and costs of a PWSR pool cover mandate to inform whether to proceed further to formally consider a regulatory change.

Overview of Victoria's Permanent Water Saving Rules

Victoria's Permanent Water Saving Rules (PWSRs) are simple rules to ensure efficient use of water on an ongoing and permanent basis across the whole of Victoria.

The key water saving rules are:

Hand-held hoses

- Water from a hand-held hose must not be used for any at any time unless the hose is fitted with a trigger nozzle and leak-free.

Garden watering

- A residential or commercial garden or lawn cannot be watered except with a hand-held hose, bucket or watering can at any time, or a watering system between 6 pm to 10 am on any day.

A public garden or lawn area or a playing surface cannot be watered except:

- with a hand-held hose, bucket or watering can at any time
- with a watering system fitted with a rain or soil moisture sensor between the hours of 6 pm to 10 am on any day, or
- under an approved Water Use Plan

Fountains and water features

Water cannot be used in a fountain or a water feature unless the fountain or water feature recirculates the water.

Hard surfaces

Water cannot be used to clean hard surfaces (including driveways, paths, concrete, tiles, and timber decking) except:

- where cleaning is required because of an accident, fire, health hazard, safety hazard or other emergency
- if staining to the surface has developed, and then only once a season
- during construction or renovation

And then, only using:

- a high-pressure water cleaning device or
- if such a device is unavailable, a hand-held hose or a bucket.

Enforcement

Urban water corporations are responsible for PWSRs under the *Water Act 1989*. Their authorised water officers can investigate and report breaches to the rules. Enforcement is buoyed by social pressure to 'do the right thing', with community members often notifying water corporations when they see non-compliance in households or businesses to help enforce the rules.

Official warnings and on-the-spot fines can be issued for offences, and in severe cases, prosecution may be sought. While water corporations usually start with a warning letter where they are aware of a breach, breaching the PWSRs carries an on-the-spot fine of one penalty unit (\$203.51 in October 2025). The maximum fine for a first offence is 10 penalty units. The maximum fine for a subsequent offence is 20 penalty units (more than \$4,000 in October 2025).

Analysis of PWSRs across Australia

Comparison to other jurisdictions

As part of this review, PWSRs from other states and territories were examined with regards to their applicability for use in Victoria.

The analysis found that there are a range of water savings rules in place across different states and water authority jurisdictions, but not all jurisdictions have an equivalent of Victoria's PWSRs. There were many similarities but there are also some key differences. Significant differences were examined in relation to their applicability for Victoria (Appendix A).

The only rule considered worthy of further analysis of risks and costs was the requirement to use pool covers, which is in place in PWSRs in the ACT, Southern Downs Regional Council, QLD (Allora, Killarney, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Western Villages) and Town of East Freemantle, WA, areas. A Western Australian variation to the National Construction Code also requires pool covers to be supplied with all new pools and spas.

Pool covers have the potential to save a household with a pool a lot of water (~100 Litres/day²) in summer and, for those with heated pools there are potential energy savings too. However, there are significant costs and potential safety risks associated with pool covers and there is limited information available on their cost effectiveness as a water efficiency measure.

Further work is required to determine the overall costs, risks and benefits of introducing a pool cover mandate in Victoria. Therefore, it is recommended that this work be undertaken over the longer term to enable sufficient analysis and stakeholder consultation. If the results suggest that a pool cover mandate is likely to be beneficial overall, a Regulatory Impact Statement and public consultation may need to be undertaken to inform a final decision.

Icon Water in the ACT includes additional rules relating to car washing, filling pools, and window washing. Victoria has rules for filling pools in Stage 1-4 restrictions. Rules for washing windows was contemplated, but considered low return on savings, while further complicating the existing PWSRs. Similar rules for washing cars using a trigger nozzle hose, a bucket, or watering can are implied in Victoria's PWSR, but not widely explicitly communicated. This can be improved in Victorian communications.

Communicating PWSRs

Examining PWSRs and general water conservation related websites from jurisdictions across Australia (including different Victorian water corporations) provided helpful ideas for how to effectively communicate PWSRs. Examples include:

- Hunter Water, NSW - streamlined approach that focus on simplifying the key details of the three main rules that impact most people (shown below).
- Barwon Water, Victoria - excellent video promoting the four PWSRs that apply to the most people. Clear website detail on how rules apply to different common activities, including car washing, rather than relying on the public to intuit implications.
- Icon Water, ACT – clarity that rules apply even when restrictions aren't in force.
- Cairns Regional Council – well communicated tips and information on how to 'Get water smart'. Presents the full list of rules and restrictions in a very clear and easy to understand format.
- PowerWater, Northern Territory - includes a simple principle for watering gardens (water lawns 3 times a week; gardens 2 times a week; native plants once a week).

DEECA's current website wording is shown alongside images from the above websites in Appendix B.

² <https://www.spasa.com.au/pool-and-spa-owners/faqs-tips-and-tricks/pool-water-savings-techniques>

Smart Water Choices at home

Smart Water Choices are the Lower Hunter's mandatory Permanent Water Conservation Measures.

These simple, everyday choices will help our community maintain our new normal by continuing the great water saving behaviours they have demonstrated during Level 1 water restrictions.



Figure 1 Snapshot from Hunter Water website

Consultation with water corporations

Victoria's urban water corporations were all invited to an industry workshop, where the desktop review of PWSRs in Victoria compared to other states was presented and issues relating to implementation of the PWSRs were discussed.

Feedback from the water corporations on the following three questions was sought both during the workshop and via a follow-up survey:

- What is the main barrier to people implementing the PWSRs?
- Are the PWSRs generally fit-for-purpose?
- Are there any re-wording or marketing quick wins?

Following the initial workshop, 12 water corporations³ from both metropolitan and regional areas provided written feedback. The key themes from the feedback are summarised under each of the questions posed below.

A summary of their feedback was presented back to the water corporations at a subsequent meeting to test and discuss overall findings. There was general agreement from all urban water corporations about the findings and no concerns were raised.

Summary of consensus water industry feedback

Main barriers implementation:

- Low public awareness
- Water efficiency in general is considered important but not front-of-mind when water isn't seen as scarce
- Limited water corporation PWSR enforcement activity outside of drought conditions (linked to both of the above points).

Are the PWSRs still fit-for-purpose?

- Yes – they are simple and practical and promote common-sense measures. They address the main opportunities for everyday water savings outside the home. The PWSRs support long-term water efficiency without being overly restrictive and help promote/embed sustainable habits outside drought periods.
- However - their effectiveness depends on ongoing promotion, engagement and compliance

Re-wording or marketing quick wins:

- PWSR communications could be improved by:
 - Using simplified, plain English and accessible messaging
 - Specifying, and expressing the rules in a way that clarifies that they are *rules* and not *guidelines*
 - Ensuring messaging is consistent across the state
 - Focussing on the three main rules that apply to most people
 - An easy-to-understand PWSR video that could be used all on water corporation websites

³ Barwon Water, Central Highlands Water, Coliban Water, Gippsland Water, Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water, Greater Western Water, Goulburn Valley Water, Melbourne Water, North East Water, Wannon Water, Westernport Water, Yarra Valley Water

Contemplated Rule Changes

We also received feedback on two potential changes to the current rules from Victorian water corporations. These were not supported by other urban water corporations and are therefore not proposed for further exploration at this time.

To include or alter the rules to account for smart watering systems

- This includes systems with soil moisture or weather inputs.
- Building in such a specific change to PWSRs to include specific rules for smart watering systems did not get broad support from water corporations as it conflicts with feedback from the majority of water corporations regarding the need to simplify PWSR messaging.
- Smart watering systems are also already a minimum requirement for public garden and lawn watering and their use is permitted under current PWSRs for residential watering during the same time restrictions as other systems (outside of the heat of the day). Water corporations can include information and an FAQ on smart watering systems to clarify this for customers.

To broaden the rules to cover indoor water use.

- Firstly, indoor use is not visible and therefore enforcement would be very challenging.
- Secondly, many indoor uses are essential for health and safety, so including rules that apply to indoor usage within the PWSRs may result in perverse impacts.
- Lastly, this proposal is considered inconsistent with Victoria's water restrictions framework as even Stage 4 water restrictions in Victoria do not include restrictions on indoor water use.

PWSR Awareness

Data on customer awareness of the Permanent Water Saving Rules was collected from the water corporations.

1. PWSR awareness is declining over time

Data from the Customer Insights Regional Water Alliance survey (which includes customers of Central Highlands Water, Coliban Water, East Gippsland Water, Gippsland Water, Goulburn Valley Water, South Gippsland Water and Westernport Water) shows that awareness in these jurisdictions has been declining on the 10 years from 2014 (Figure 22).

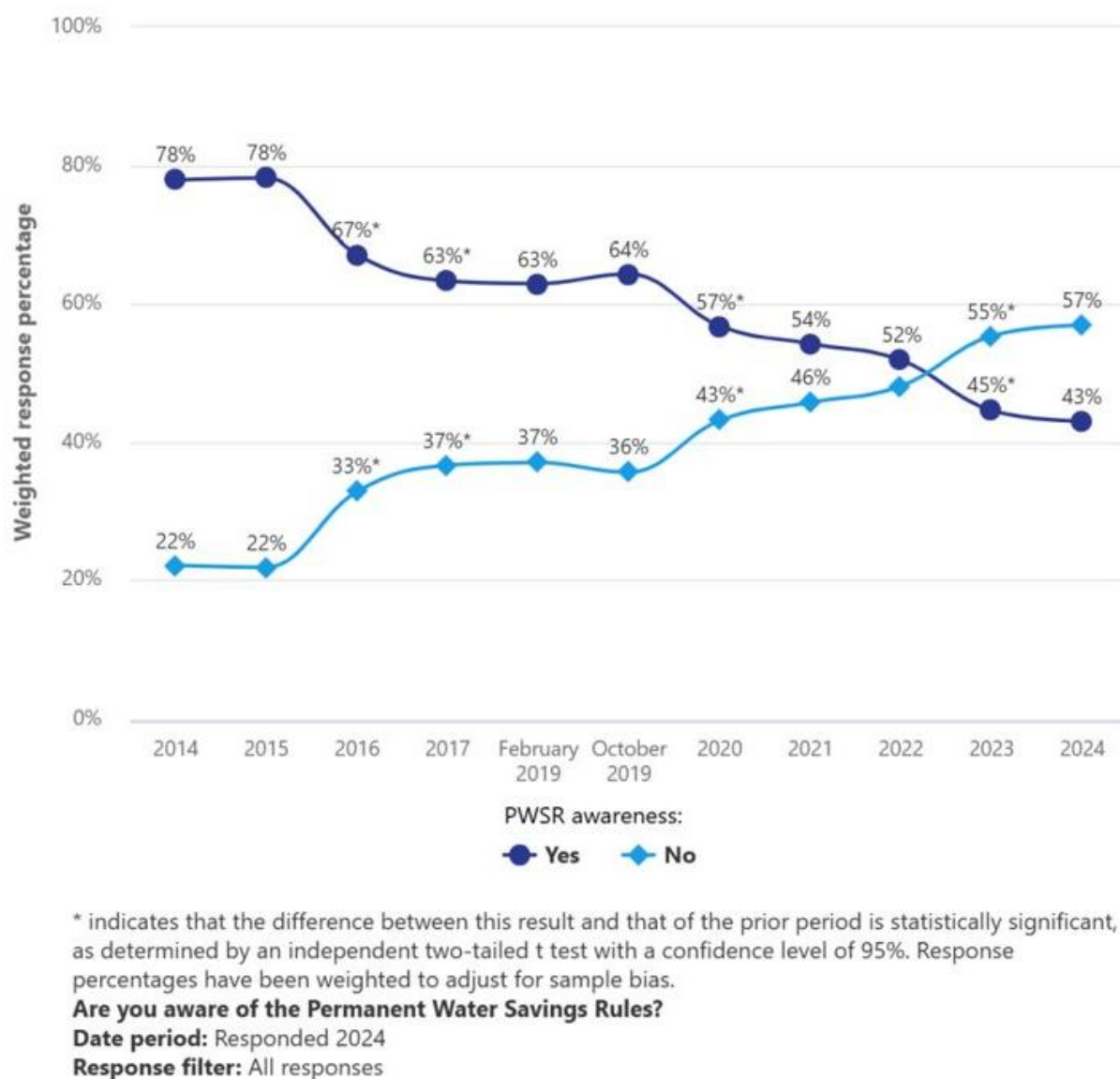


Figure 2 Customer Insights Regional Water Alliance survey (collected by Insync) – PWSR Awareness

2. PWSR awareness is lower in younger Victorians

Younger people are less likely to be aware of the rules as shown in Figure 3 Customer Insights Regional Water Alliance survey (collected by Insync) - PWSR awareness by age. For the younger than 28 group, this may be attributable to them being children during the Millenium Drought, and therefore not responsible for household water management and bills at the time.

Additionally, Permanent Water Saving Rules have frequently been communicated through household water bills. Renting typically decreases with age, which changes how households consume and receive their water bill.

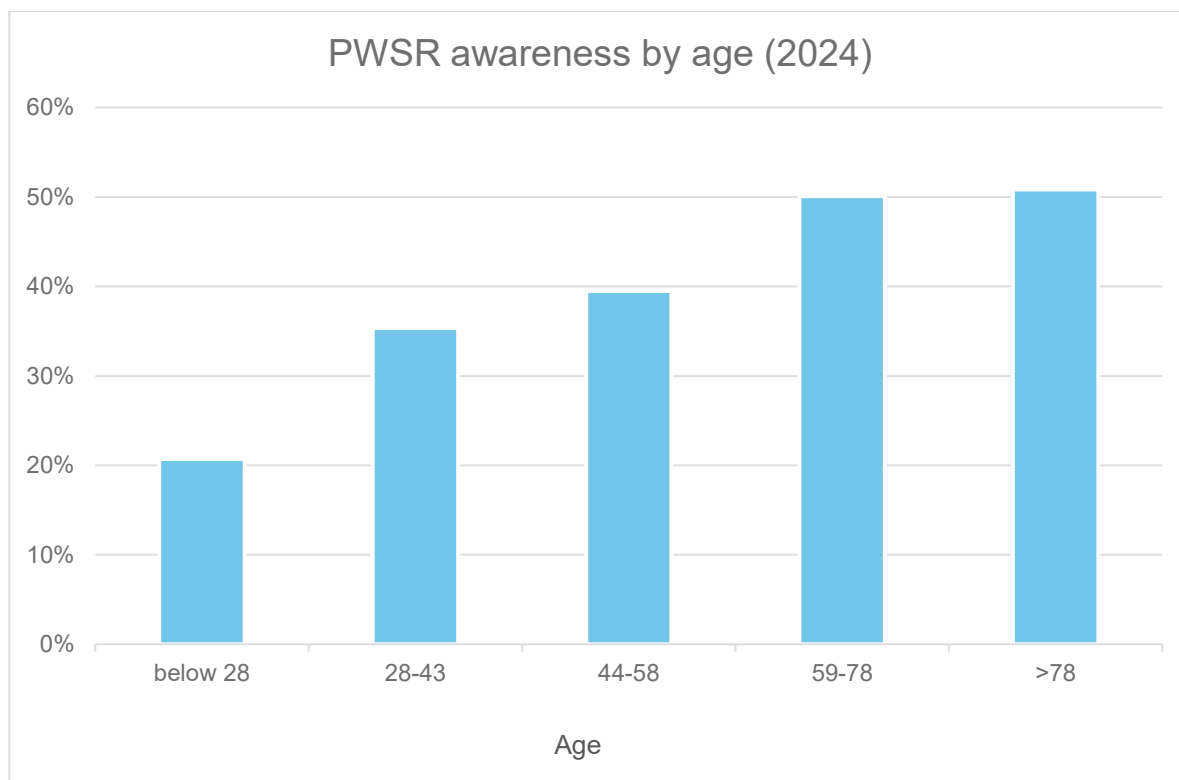


Figure 3 Customer Insights Regional Water Alliance survey (collected by Insync) - PWSR awareness by age

3. PWSR awareness varies by region

Higher levels of awareness were identified in the North-west of Victoria. A recent (May-June 2025) survey by Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water revealed that 76% of respondents were aware of the PWSRs. Awareness varied slightly across customer groups in the region, with 75% of drinking water customers, 74% of non-drinking water customers, 82% of rural water customers and 69% of commercial customers reporting being aware.

Grampians Wimmera Mallee Water believes that the higher levels of awareness are likely to be due to many of their customers having lived in the area for a long time and experiencing the severe impacts of, and the need to save water during the Millenium Drought, and other water shortages, in their dry region.

Appendix A - Analysis of PWSRs in other Australian states

State	Water corporation + links to PWSRs	Key differences	Applicability for Victoria
New South Wales	Sydney Water	<p>Water Wise Guidelines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Six general rules, which are very similar to Victoria's PWSRs. • The rules state that 'Smart' watering systems can be used at any time • There are rules banning unattended taps and hoses • There is a requirement to comply to a notice by Sydney Water to repair a water leak by a date nominated in that notice. • There are many caveats around the rules (20 caveats) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • While use of smart irrigation is increasing in Victoria and should be encouraged, this exemption is not considered beneficial for Victoria at this stage. While watering with a smart watering system is better than traditional systems (as you only water when the soil is dry), watering should still occur outside of the hottest hours of the day to both reduce evaporation and minimise pressure on our drinking water systems. Smart watering systems are already a minimum requirement for public garden and lawn watering and their use is permitted under current PWSRs for residential watering during the same time restrictions as other systems (outside of the heat of the day). • Rules relating to unattended taps and hoses are not recommended for adoption as our rules specify that all hoses need to have a trigger nozzle, which implies that they shouldn't or can't be left on. Not leaving taps on is considered obvious / unlikely to occur frequently. • Water corporations have existing powers under the Water Act 1989 to issue notices requiring that leaks be fixed and can impose penalties for non-compliance (notice to repair under s 150, contravention notice under s 151 and waste and

State	Water corporation + links to PWSRs	Key differences	Applicability for Victoria
	<u>Hunter Water</u>	<i>Permanent Water Conservation Measures (known as Smart Water Choices to the public)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Similar rules to Sydney Water 	<p>misuse of water supply penalties under s 143 of the Water Act).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The caveats could be overwhelming and difficult to remember therefore not recommended for adoption in Victoria The word ‘choices’ could be misleading – the public may not realise that these are <i>rules</i> and not optional choices. <i>[Water corporation feedback indicates that the public doesn’t always realise the PWSRs are compulsory requirements and that we need to make this clear]</i>
	<u>Riverina Water</u>	Has a 5-stage water restriction framework where Stage 1 rules (similar to PWSRs) are automatically applied during NSW daylight savings. Key differences include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No trigger nozzle rule Can hose hard surfaces at certain times 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Victoria’s requirement to follow the rules all year around is easier to remember and enforce and helps people understand that we need to be sensible with our water use at all times, not just in Summer. Victoria’s trigger nozzle and hard surface hosing rules are considered sensible rules that save water without being overly burdensome.
Australian Capital Territory	<u>Icon Water</u>	<i>Permanent Water Conservation Measures</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Additional rules relating to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> washing vehicles: you can wash vehicles at a commercial car wash, or on a lawn or soft surface (with a bucket, high-pressure cleaner or a hose with trigger nozzle), but not on concrete or hard surface unless you have no other option windows: you can wash windows and other external parts of buildings at any time using a 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adding more rules are likely to make them too hard to remember. <i>[Water corporation feedback included that the rules could be simpler, focussing on only the top three rules]</i> There are similar rules regarding car washing and topping up pools under Victorian Stage 1 water restrictions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> You can wash your car, boat or other vehicle at home using a high-pressure cleaning unit, a

State	Water corporation + links to PWSRs	Key differences	Applicability for Victoria
		<p>bucket and mop or brush, squeegee or a high-pressure low-volume cleaner but not with a standard garden hose, even if it has a trigger nozzle</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - pools: you can only top up your pool and spa (3,000 litres or more) using a bucket, a watering can or a handheld hose fitted with a trigger nozzle, only between 6pm - 9am, and only if there is cover on the pool/spa. Water offset plans are required for new pools or filling an empty existing pool, and pool covers are required. 	<p>hand-held hose fitted with a trigger nozzle or a bucket or watering can at any time, any day of the week, or at a commercial car wash.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new pool or spa of up to 2,000 litres can be filled with a hand-held hose, bucket, watering can, or an automatic water top-up device. However, a new or existing pool or spa of greater than 2,000 litres can only be filled in accordance with a Water Use Plan. • An existing pool or spa of any size can be topped up using an automatic top-up device or a hand-held hose, bucket or watering can.
South Australia	SAWater	No permanent water saving rules.	NA
Queensland	Seqwater	No permanent water saving rules.	NA

State	Water corporation + links to PWSRs	Key differences	Applicability for Victoria
	<u>Southern Downs Regional Council</u> (Allora, Killarney, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Western Villages)	<i>Permanent Water Saving Rules</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permits watering of gardens and hard surfaces is permitted in the mornings and evenings, with different times specified in different months • Permit use of high pressure / low volume devices for cleaning at any time • Specify that they allow the use of 200 litres per person per day • Requirements for pool covers to be used.⁴ 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Having different times for watering in different months is harder for people to remember. • Victoria's trigger nozzle and hard surface hosing rules are considered sensible rules that save water without being overly burdensome. • The specification of a volumetric limit, like 200 litres per day, would be difficult to enforce. We have voluntary targets for water use (T150 in Greater Melbourne and Target Your water use in the regions) to incentivise water conservation instead. • Part 3.12.5 of the National Construction Code requires a heated swimming pool or spa pool to have a cover. • A new Victorian requirement to always use pool covers on all pools may be worth investigating in more detail. Covers can save a lot of water by reducing evaporation (<i>The Pools and Spas association estimates that a pool cover can save up to 100 litres a day during summer</i>). However they are a substantial cost and the majority of drowning and near-drowning incidents occur in pools with covers on.⁵

⁴ Also a requirement for new Class 1 and 2 homes in Town of East Freemantle, WA.
https://www.eastfreemantle.wa.gov.au/Profiles/eastfreemantle/Assets/ClientData/Waterwise_Swimming_Pool_and_Spa_Cover_Policy.pdf

⁵ The design and safety of swimming pool covers Beverley Norris & John R. Wilson, Pages 163-174 | Received 27 Jun 1994, Published online: 17 Apr 2007,
<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09298349408945736>

State	Water corporation + links to PWSRs	Key differences	Applicability for Victoria
	Cairns Regional Council	<i>Permanent Water Saving Conservation Measures</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Different watering days for odd and even numbered homes, no sprinkler use on Mondays, and use of hand-held hoses with a trigger nozzle, watering cans and buckets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sprinkler use days may be too complex for people to remember and for water corporations to enforce.
Western Australia	Water Corporation	<i>Permanent Water Efficiency Measures</i> <i>Area-based watering days (not formal rules):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Focus on restricting use of sprinklers during the day, and sprinkler rostering - a watering day roster applies to scheme and domestic garden bore sprinkler use in certain areas of the state. Also has a 'winter sprinkler switch-off', which is a permanent water-efficiency measure starting 1 June and ending 31 August each year, when all sprinklers must be switched off 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Not as relevant for Victoria given the differing climate and a less use of sprinklers compared to WA, particularly during winter. It's also very complex and may be difficult to remember and enforce.
Tasmania	TasWater	No permanent water saving rules.	NA
Northern Territory	PowerWater	No permanent water saving rules (except in Katherine).	NA

Appendix B – Current DEECA PWSR wording and images of water corporation websites

Current DEECA PWSR wording as per on <https://www.water.vic.gov.au/for-households/water-restrictions-and-rules/permanent-water-saving-rules>

Permanent water saving rules

Permanent water-saving rules were introduced in 2011 to help us use water efficiently and are currently under review to ensure they are still fit for purpose ahead of this summer.

Key water saving rules

These rules let you know how you can use water.

Hand-held hose

Water from a hand-held hose must not be used for any purpose (whether the use is subject to a permanent water saving rule) at any time unless the hose is:

- fitted with a trigger nozzle and
- leak-free.

Residential or commercial gardens and lawns

A residential or commercial garden or lawn cannot be watered except with the following:

- a hand-held hose, bucket or watering can at any time or
- a watering system between 6 pm to 10 am on any day.

Public gardens and lawns and playing surfaces

A public garden or lawn area or a playing surface cannot be watered except:

- with a hand-held hose, bucket or watering can at any time
- with a watering system fitted with a rain or soil moisture sensor between the hours of 6 pm to 10 am on any day, or
- under an approved Water Use Plan.

Fountains and water features

Water cannot be used in a fountain or a water feature unless the fountain or water feature recirculates the water.

Cleaning of hard surfaces

Water cannot be used to clean hard surfaces (including driveways, paths, concrete, tiles, and timber decking) except:

- where cleaning is required because of an accident, fire, health hazard, safety hazard or other emergency
- if staining to the surface has developed, and then only once a season
- during construction or renovation.

And then, only using:

- a high-pressure water cleaning device or
- if such a device is unavailable, a hand-held hose or a bucket.

Smart Water Choices at home

Smart Water Choices are the Lower Hunter's mandatory Permanent Water Conservation Measures.

These simple, everyday choices will help our community maintain our new normal by continuing the great water saving behaviours they have demonstrated during Level 1 water restrictions.



Quick look at Smart Water Choices

 <p>Trigger nozzle</p> <p>All hand held hoses must have a trigger nozzle. Trigger nozzles provide more control over the water flow of your hose so less water is wasted.</p>	 <p>Watering</p> <p>Only watering the garden before 10 am or after 4 pm. This avoids the hottest part of the day when water wastage occurs due to evaporation.</p>	 <p>Hard surfaces</p> <p>No hosing of hard surfaces such as concrete, paths and driveways. By swapping to a broom or leaf blower, you'll save water from being washed down the drain.</p>	 <p>Sprinklers</p> <p>Watering with a sprinkler, irrigation system or hose is permitted any day before 10am or after 4pm.</p>
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PowerWater (NT)

Saving water in your garden

[Customers](#) > [Water and wastewater](#) > [Saving water](#) > [Saving water at your home](#) > [Saving water in your garden](#)

When to water: The 3, 2, 1 guide

Many people struggle to know how much to water their garden. How many days per week is right? And for how long? It can be confusing, but there is a handy tip to make it easier to know what to do.

A simple rule of thumb to use when scheduling your irrigation system zones is the 3, 2, 1 guide:

Water lawns three times a week.

Water your garden twice a week.

Water native plants just once a week.

This guide will encourage your plants to grow deep root systems, giving them better access to water and nutrients in the soil.

Barwon Water (Victoria)

Permanent water saving rules (PWSR)

Our community recognises water is a precious resource and shouldn't be wasted. The permanent water saving rules (PWSR) are a set of simple, common-sense rules to reduce demand and make sure we all use water wisely.

The permanent water saving rules are in place every day of the year and are uniform across Victoria.

The rules apply to drinking water only. They **do not apply** to greywater, tank water (rainwater), bore water or recycled water.



Hoses

All hand-held hoses must:

- be fitted with a **trigger nozzle**, and
- be leak-free.

Gardens and lawns

Residential and commercial gardens and lawns can be watered:

- with a hand-held hose (fitted with a trigger nozzle) at any time, any day, or
- with a sprinkler or watering system **after 6 pm** or **before 10 am** on any day (or overnight).

A *watering system* is any automatic or manually operated system of sprinklers, drip hoses, weep hoses, etc. Even a simple garden sprinkler connected to a tap is considered a *watering system*.

The most efficient and effective watering system is a sub-surface drip hose, connected to a timer to water overnight. This ensure plants get water near their roots, and minimises water loss to evaporation.

Public gardens, lawns and playing surfaces

Public gardens, lawns and playing surfaces (e.g. bowling greens, football/cricket ovals, soccer pitches, etc.) can be watered:

- with a hand-held hose (fitted with a trigger nozzle) at any time, any day,
- by a sprinkler or watering system **fitted with a rain or soil moisture sensor** after 6 pm or before 10 am, on any day (or overnight).

A *watering system* is any automatic or manually operated system of sprinklers, drip hoses, weep hoses, etc.

No restrictions apply to watering plants or vegetables at wholesale, retail or municipal plant nurseries.

Fountains and water features

Fountains and water features must recirculate water (almost all of them do).

Paved areas and hard surfaces

You can use water to clean driveways, paths, decking, concrete or other hard surfaces, only:

- if required as a result of an accident or fire
- there is a health or safety hazard
- if staining has developed (once a year)
- during construction or renovation.

Use a high-pressure water cleaner if available. Otherwise, a hand-held hose or bucket may be used.

Windows

There are no restrictions on washing windows.

Cars and boats

Cars, boats and other vehicles can be washed at home at any time or any day, using

- a high-pressure water cleaner; or
- a hose fitted with a trigger nozzle; or
- a bucket or watering can.

The same rules apply to car dealerships.

Pools, spas and ponds

There are no restrictions on filling or topping up pools, spas or ponds.

Enforcement and penalties

Permanent water saving rules (PWSR) are enforced under the *Water Act (1989)*.

If you witness a breach of the rules, please **contact us** with details of the offence. An authorised water officer will investigate and report. Official warnings and on-the-spot fines can be issued for offences, and in severe cases, prosecution may be sought.

Frequently asked questions

What is a high-pressure water cleaning device?

+

Are these water restrictions? When will they end?

+

Why can I only water at night or early in the morning?

+

What restrictions apply to bore, grey, rainwater or recycled water?

+

What are the penalties for breaching the rules?

+

Icon Water (ACT)



[Home](#) > [My Home](#) > [Saving water](#) > Permanent Water Conservation Measures

Permanent Water Conservation Measures

There are rules around when and how you use drinking water in Canberra and Queanbeyan. These rules are called our Permanent Water Conservation Measures.

These measures apply when temporary water restrictions are not in force, although they are similar to Stage 1 temporary restrictions in other regions.

The Measures are mandatory and enforceable, and penalties (fines) may apply under the Utilities (Water Conservation) Regulation 2006.



Sharing the Permanent Water Conservation Measures

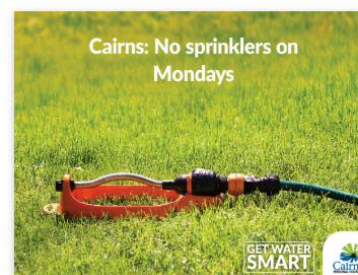
You can help by sharing these measures with friends and family in person and online. Check out this page for an overview of all the places you can find us talking about water conservation in 2020 and download a copy of the [A4 Permanent Water Conservation Measures poster](#).

Cairns Regional Council (QLD)


Permanent water conservation measures apply to all Cairns residents.

Permanent water conservation measures promote responsible and efficient use of town water. Watering in the cool of the day ensures low evaporation rates and by alternating watering times between odd and even numbered houses we are supporting the sustainable use of water.

- **Odd-numbered houses** permitted to use sprinklers on Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday between the hours of 5am - 9am and 5pm - 9pm.
- **Even-numbered houses** permitted to use sprinklers on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday between the hours of 5am - 9am and 5pm - 9pm.
- **No sprinkler use permitted on Monday.**
- Hand-held hoses with a trigger nozzle, watering cans and buckets can be used at any time.



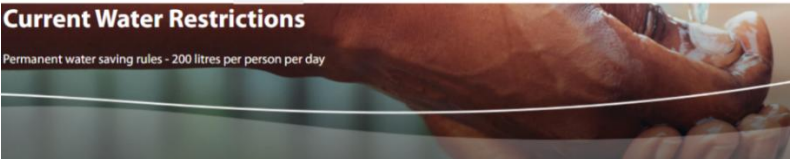
Southern Downs Regional Council (QLD)



HomeLiving HereOur RegionDoing BusinessPayments & ServicesCouncilI want to...

Current Water Restrictions

Permanent water saving rules - 200 litres per person per day



Home > Living Here > Environment, Water & Waste > Waterwise Community > Water Restrictions Rules

Safe, secure, reliable, and cost-effective water supply underpins the livelihood and lifestyle of the Southern Downs Region's residents while providing opportunities for economic and community development. As the region experiences frequent and sometimes severe droughts, occasional water supply reduction (or water restrictions) measures are required. The current permanent water restrictions are as follows:

Outdoor watering and cleaning

Outdoor watering and cleaning of hard surfaces is permitted and can only occur during the following allocated times:

- May -September: 7am – 9am and 4pm – 6pm
- October – April: 6am – 8am and 5pm – 7pm

Residents can clean windows, mirrors and lights for safety at any time of day using hand-held hoses, buckets and high pressure/low volume water cleaning units. General cleaning of timber decks, windows driveways, pathways, house and roof painting preparation, solar panels, entertainment areas, outdoor furniture and paved surfaces is permitted with hand-held hoses, buckets and high pressure/low volume water cleaning units. Hand-held hoses can only be used for cleaning and watering when fitted with a trigger nozzle and are leak free.

Water Corporation (WA)

Waterwise

Only water once on your watering days

Save water and stick to our waterwise irrigation tips, like watering once before 9am or after 6pm on your rostered days.

> Check your watering days




How waterwise are you?

Find out how your water use compares to other households like yours. Answer a few questions about your home to check your waterwise status and water saving target.

COMPARE YOUR HOME



Riverina Water (NSW)



Billing & accountsYour waterDevelopers & plumbersCommunity & educationAbout us

Home > Your water > Water restrictions >

About water restrictions

During daylight savings each year, Stage 1 water restrictions come into effect.

Stage 1 is to remind you to be mindful of your water usage as the weather warms up.

Outside of daylight savings, there are no water restrictions imposed unless otherwise specified. From time to time, certain areas may have temporary water restrictions due to emergencies eg bushfire or infrastructure issues.

Our water restrictions are triggered based on supply and usage. For full details, please see our [Water Restrictions Policy](#).

Stage 1

When are Stage 1 Water Restrictions in place?	+
Gardens and lawns	+
Driveways	+

Winter Sprinkler Switch-off

The Winter Sprinkler Switch-off runs from 1 June until 31 August every year. Both businesses and households are included.

Climate change means it's more important than ever to save water for when it's needed most. In winter, we can let nature water our gardens and switch our sprinklers off to make big water savings.

Check if you're included by using the tool below. If you live elsewhere in WA, you can find your watering days [here](#).

Think Climate Change. Be Waterwise.

Check if you're included here:

Postcode

CHECK