

During the hot summer months, Narromine Shire Council ask all residents to keep in mind, the way water is used around the home and in the garden.

Narromine's water supply is being affected, due to heavy water usage, causing the town reservoirs to operate at low levels which causes low water pressure. Council's bores are running to full capacity to keep up with the demand.

Below are some handy hints in being water wise.

General Household Tips

- To avoid wasting drinking water from a running tap, collect it in a bottle or jug and store it in the fridge until it is cool enough to drink.
- Garbage-disposal units use about 6 litres of water per day. Put suitable food scraps into a composter or worm farm rather than down the kitchen sink.
- When you clean your fish tank, use the 'old' nitrogen and phosphorous-rich water on your plants.

Dishwasher Tips

- Look for dishwashers that have a National Water Conservation or WELS Label. The best water rating achieved by dishwashers is 5 star.
- Only use the dishwasher when you have a full load.
- Use the rinse-hold setting on the dishwasher, if it has one, rather than rinsing dishes under the tap.
- Catch running water whilst waiting for it to warm up. Use it to water plants, rinse dishes or wash fruit and vegetables.
- If you have a leaking tap, replace the washer or other components as required. Dripping taps can waste **30 – 200 litres of water per day**.

Bathroom Tips

- Only fill the tub with as much water as needed. Use less for kids and pets.
- Check the temperature as you fill. Adding extra water to get the correct temperature after the bath is at the right level is wasteful.
- Regularly check your plug for leaks and replace as necessary.
- Bucket used bath water onto the garden, or use it to wash your car. Check that soaps and detergents in the water won't harm garden plants.
- Use a bucket to collect water while waiting for the shower to get hot
- If you can't afford a new toilet, you can purchase small gadgets to reduce the volume used with each flush of an older style toilet. They work by causing the toilet to flush for as long as the button is pressed. Waterwizz and Flexiflush are two types of these gadgets.
- Leaking toilet cisterns waste litres of water each day. Check for leaks by putting a few drops of food dye in the cistern. If you have a leak, coloured water will appear in the bowl before the toilet has been flushed.

Tips for washing cars

- Use a waterless car wash - there are now a number of these products available
- If water restrictions permit, wash cars, boats and other vehicles on the lawn (if practical) with a bucket not a running hose. Use a trigger nozzle or a positive shut-off nozzle infrequently for occasional rinsing sprays.
- Use captured 'warm-up' water from inside the home or treated greywater to wash vehicles.
- Use a commercial car wash that recycles its wash water.

Driveways

Use a broom, brush or rake to sweep and clean outdoor paths and paving instead of hosing them down with water.

Garden Water wise practices

There are four key things to remember about reducing water use:

- Mulch
- Drip irrigation
- Wetting agents and water storage products for your soil
- Drought tolerant plants

Here are a few simple but very effective tips:

- Don't water in the middle of the day, in windy conditions or if it is likely to rain
- Make a small dam from mulch and soil to avoid water running off the soil
- Water the roots of plants rather than the leaves, reducing wind spray and evaporation
- Cool season grasses should be left longer in summer but warm season grasses such as couch and buffalo can be kept short
- Avoid cutting grass by more than a third of its length at any one time
- Replace struggling plants in autumn with drought tolerant species

Mulch

Mulch is essential if you are going to **keep a garden** going through a hot summer with **high level Water** restrictions. The basic rule is any **mulch is better than** no mulch.

Compost

Soil is a living thing. Compost increases the organic content of the soil which holds water and provides the material that bacteria and worms need to break down to keep your soil alive and full of nutrients. The perfect growing medium is soil that drains easily, so it doesn't get waterlogged, but holds enough water to feed the plants and compost will do both these things.

