



What does UOW do to reduce water use?



WATER CONSCIOUS INITIATIVES

UOW undertakes a range of initiatives to minimise potable water use and many of these are embedded in our building standards and practices.

The Sustainable Buildings Research Centre (SBRC) was built to the Living Building Challenge standards and uses recycled rainwater except where local health and safety regulations require that potable water from the public water supply must be used. Regular use of potable water in the SBRC is limited to the kitchen sink and dishwasher and a drinking fountain, and irregular use to safety appliances (with statutory requirements) such as a chemical safety shower and fire hydrants. All other water in the SBRC building is drawn from the 65,000 L underground rainwater tank. Both the rainwater and potable water usage is sub-metered and recorded in the building management system.

Other areas of the university have been designed to 5 star Greenstar building principles and include the installation of:

- WELS certified toilets and associated taps in all new buildings and refurbishments within all bathrooms, kitchens, cleaning areas and appropriate laboratory areas (or similar). The most recent are those installed in Building 29 and Building 42.

- Smart water metering across the campuses and additional metering is added with all new buildings to help analyse water consumption, identify baselines and opportunities for improvement, prioritise actions and identify water leaks.
- Rainwater tanks and the water captured is used for toilet flushing within the building

Other design principles that are applied to reduce water use include:

- Water sensitive urban design principles. One example is the rain garden was installed around building 42 to filter stormwater runoff from surrounding areas and slow the speed of water movement.
- Landscape design principles for our campuses are to plant local native species that are better able to adapt and survive in local conditions. Aside from watering to establish new plants very little irrigation is conducted on our campuses as a result. Irrigation that is conducted is to maintain high quality sporting fields. Rainwater tanks and irrigation systems have been installed in these areas to enable management of efficient irrigation practices that utilise rainwater over potable water.

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