

Water efficiency requirements in houses, townhouses and units.

Sustainable housing laws.



The facts

For the greener good.

What are the water efficiency requirements?

Toilets: minimum 4-star dual flush, as rated under the Water Efficiency and Labelling Standards scheme (WELS).

Tapware: minimum 3-star WELS rated for kitchen sinks, basins and laundry troughs.

Showerheads: minimum 3-star WELS rated showerheads.

Garden irrigation systems: new and replacement systems need to comply with the Queensland Water Commission's efficient irrigation for water conservation guideline. Check with your local council for possible irrigation and water restrictions.

What were the previous water efficiency requirements in Queensland?

Prior to 1 March 2009, the Queensland Development Code (QDC) required all new houses and townhouses (class 1 buildings) and all units (class 2 buildings) to have 3-star WELS rated toilets and showerheads.

There were no previous minimum water efficiency requirements for tapware in dwellings or for garden irrigation systems.

When were the current water efficiency requirements introduced in Queensland?

New requirements for water efficiency on houses and units commenced on 1 March 2009 and apply statewide.

What buildings do the water efficiency requirements apply to?

The requirements apply to all new houses, townhouses and units.

They also apply to existing houses, townhouses or units at time of renovation or extension. If installing an irrigation system at any time, it must meet the requirements.

How do the water efficiency requirements benefit me?

Installing water efficient fixtures and fittings around the home not only saves water, but can also save you money with your ongoing water bills.

How does this benefit Queensland?

Water conservation is essential with Queensland's growing population, especially given that rainfall conditions can be highly variable. These requirements can assist to reduce demand on our water resources and infrastructure.

How do the water efficiency requirements apply to existing houses, townhouses and units?

When a renovation or extension requires building and plumbing approval, all toilet and showerhead fixtures within the dwelling, regardless of whether or not the fixture is part of the renovation or extension work, must be upgraded to a minimum 4-star WELS rating for toilets and a minimum 3-star WELS rating for showerheads.

Tapware installed in a new area of an existing house, townhouse or unit, is required to be a minimum 3-star WELS rated. There is no requirement to upgrade existing tapware in the dwelling.

If only a plumbing approval is required in an existing dwelling, the water efficiency requirements apply to the fixtures included as part of the new work. For example, with a bathroom renovation, the showerhead and basin tapware in this area would only be required to comply.

For an existing house, townhouse or unit where a garden irrigation system is installed or replaced, the Queensland Plumbing and Wastewater Code provisions apply.

forthegreenergood.qld.gov.au
For the greener good.



Who can install water efficient fixtures?

Toilets and tapware need to be installed by a licensed plumber. Showerheads may be installed by the homeowner. A landscaper or homeowner may install a garden irrigation system.

How are the water efficiency requirements implemented?

The requirements are implemented through the QDC 4.1—Sustainable buildings and the Queensland Plumbing and Wastewater Code.

How do these water efficiency requirements apply to rental properties?

Since 1 April 2008, landlords of rental properties have been able to pass on full water consumption costs to tenants where the building has been individually metered and water efficient fixtures—showerheads,

toilets and tapware to kitchen sinks, basins and laundry tubs—are installed. Charging arrangements must be stated in the tenancy agreement.

What are the key features of a water efficient irrigation system?

If you decide to install a water efficient irrigation system, consider the following fittings: a tap timer, rain sensor, soil moisture sensor, number and type of water spray emitters.

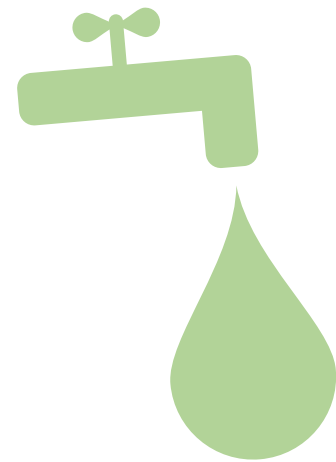
What size pump do I need if my rainwater tank supplies water for the irrigation system?


Check with your irrigation system retailer or rainwater tank supplier about the best pump size for servicing all your water requirements drawn from the rainwater tank.

For new houses and townhouses, water from the rainwater tank is also required to be plumbed to all toilets and the cold water outlet of the washing machine.

For more information

For further information refer to QDC 4.1—Sustainable buildings, the associated guideline and the Queensland Plumbing and Wastewater Code. These are available on the Department of Infrastructure and Planning's website or contact Building Codes Queensland.



 Tudor RP 100% recycled
This fact sheet is printed on Tudor RP paper which is Australian made from 100% recycled fibre. No chlorine bleaching occurs in the recycling process and Australian Paper is ISO 14001 certified. Sales of Tudor RP support Landcare Australia.

Building Codes Queensland Department of Infrastructure and Planning

PO Box 15009 City East Qld 4002 Australia

tel. +61 7 3227 8548 fax. +61 7 3224 4683

email. buildingcodes@dip.qld.gov.au www.dip.qld.gov.au

© The State of Queensland (Department of Infrastructure and Planning) 2010. Published by the Queensland Government, May 2010, 100 George Street, Brisbane Qld 4000.
Disclaimer: This document is produced to convey general information. While every care has been taken in preparing this document, the State of Queensland accepts no responsibility for decisions or actions taken as a result of any data, information, statement or advice, express or implied, contained within. The contents of this document were correct to the best of our knowledge at the time of publishing.