



## Water issue running hot

January

February

**March 2005**

April

May

June July

August

September

October

November

December

The commercial building sector in Sydney Water's area of operations alone uses approximately 100 million litres of water **per day**. Significant opportunities exist to demonstrate leadership in water management and generate significant savings in the process.

It is no wonder that Australia's water management issues are high on the agenda - we will face a national shortfall of 275 gegalitres of water (about half of the contents of Sydney harbour) by 2015\* unless we drastically reduce our consumption.

Although Government is taking measures to address this issue, the responsibility lies with industry to conserve water. The two initiatives in Sydney's Water Plan which are most likely to affect industry are:

- The requirement for businesses to prepare and implement water efficiency plans, and
- The likely introduction of two-tier charges to encourage economic usage.

**Water efficiency plans**

Commercial and industrial businesses will be required to prepare, then implement, water conservation plans. Initially, the scheme will be restricted to the top 200 water-using businesses in the Sydney metropolitan area, and will begin in early 2006. Plans to extend the scheme to a wider consumer group will develop in due course. The scheme aims to achieve 20% reductions within (compulsorily) participating companies.

**Two-Tier Charging**

Currently, Sydney Water charges uniform rates irrespective of total usage, and rates have only kept pace with inflation over the last few years, despite increasing pressure on water reserves.

The NSW government is considering the introduction of a change to the pricing structure for water, which will introduce higher unit rates for usage above certain levels. This initiative is as likely to apply to businesses as to households.

\* Water Services Association

**What can be done at a building-level to conserve water?**

- **Cooling towers.** Review the performance of cooling towers. On average, 30% of water consumed in the commercial building sector is used in operating this equipment.
- **Washroom taps.** Adjust or install water restrictors on washroom taps.
- **Toilet systems.** Install dual flush toilets, convert urinals from timer to sensor flushing, implement toilet flusherette system-flow control via adjustment of flush valves.
- **Waterless urinals.** Consider the installation of waterless urinal cubes (see case study below).
- **Irrigation and landscaping.** Review irrigation methods, rainwater storage and plant selection in your landscaping programme.
- **Partner.** With your property manager and water authority to tap into knowledge base regarding water management.

**Colliers International Case Study**

Colliers International's Adelaide Office is leading the field in the implementation of water saving initiatives at 10 Pulteney Street.

The installation of waterless urinal cubes throughout the 18 floors complex has seen a reduction in water consumption in the building over the past 12 months in the vicinity of four million litres. The initiative cost \$2,400 and **delivered water cost-savings and reduced plumbing costs of \$8,200.**

Colliers International is working with a number of owners to implement water management initiatives. For further information, contact your Property Manager or visit [www.sydneywater.com.au/SavingWater/InYourBusiness](http://www.sydneywater.com.au/SavingWater/InYourBusiness).