

Water Conservation in the NSW Health System

Summary Information to health facilities about methods of saving water.

Document type Information Bulletin

Document number IB2010_036

Publication date 15 July 2010

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Review date 30 September 2024

Policy manual Not applicable

File number H10/22811

Previous reference N/A

Status Review

Functional group Corporate Administration - Asset Management
Population Health - Water

Applies to Area Health Services/Chief Executive Governed Statutory Health Corporation, Board Governed Statutory Health Corporations, Affiliated Health Organisations, Affiliated Health Organisations - Declared, Public Health System Support Division, Ministry of Health, Public Health Units, Public Hospitals

Distributed to Public Health System, Divisions of General Practice, Ministry of Health

Audience All staff

WATER CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABILITY IN THE NSW HEALTH SYSTEM

PURPOSE

The purpose of this Information Bulletin is to promote the sustainable use of water in the Public Health System. The NSW Government Sustainability Policy sets targets to reduce water consumption by 15% by 2010/11 and to become carbon neutral by 2020. All elements of the policy apply to NSW Health.

KEY INFORMATION

The Public Health System and its staff are encouraged to identify potential water saving opportunities in all health institutions, including NSW Health administrative offices, and to implement water conservation measures where practical. Potential water conservation measures include: installing water-saving devices; programmed maintenance to prevent or detect wastage and repair leaks; conducting audits of water use and encouraging staff to consider ways in which they can reduce water consumption.

As well as being environmentally responsible, water conservation may be viewed as a broad public health issue. Careful and responsible use of existing water resources conserves high quality water for public consumption, contributing to the maintenance of health by ensuring a supply of drinking water which is safe for public use.

It is important that water conservation measures should not be adopted if they will place the health of patients or staff at risk, for instance by compromising standard hygiene procedures. Further information on this issue is available by contacting NSW Health's Water Unit in the Environmental Health Branch, (02) 9816 0521 or (02) 9816 0292 or Sustainability and Facilities Management in the Strategic Procurement and Business Development Branch on (02) 9424 5985.

ATTACHMENTS

1. NSW Government Sustainability Policy (2008, DECCW)

<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/government/08453SustainabilityPolicy.pdf>