



Speech by

PETER WELLINGTON

MEMBER FOR NICKLIN

Hansard 14 November 2000

RAINWATER TANKS

Mr WELLINGTON (Nicklin—IND) (11.54 a.m.): I rise to speak on the importance of a State Government incentive to encourage greater use of rainwater tanks in our community. I thank the member for Burdekin for inviting me to join him in speaking on this important issue.

As I said in the House on 25 March 1999, the widespread use of rainwater tanks could solve one of the most difficult problems we have in Queensland; that is, providing water to our ever-increasing population. We live in one of the driest continents in the world, and water is our most precious commodity. I have been informed that the average Queenslanders uses about 637 litres of water every day, and as our population increases so does our need for more water.

I reiterate for the benefit of all members that during the March 1999 debate on this matter, there was unanimous support by all members of Parliament for my motion that called on the State Government to investigate and, if possible, make provision in that year's Budget for a rainwater tank rebate program so as to encourage water conservation in Queensland.

In the past, the greatest obstacle to the expansion of the use of rainwater tanks revolved around health and water quality issues. The argument was that lead and other pollutants from cars and industry settled on the roofs of buildings with rainwater tanks and contaminated the water, making it unsafe for human consumption. This obstacle is no longer a valid concern, and I remind all members of the very successful rainwater tank filtering system display that the Speaker allowed to be set up on the Speaker's Green during the April sitting of the State Parliament in 1999. That display demonstrated how effective a simple water diverter and water tank sock filter was in filtering water. There are many other water filtering devices and filtering systems on the market that are capable of significantly reducing the level of debris and pollutants entering water tanks.

I still believe that a State Government rainwater tank rebate program would be a simple and very effective strategy to not just encourage water conservation in Queensland but also play an important role in job creation and the development of new technology for the improvement of rainwater tank water quality.

In the March 1999 debate on this matter, the Minister for the Environment and member for Everton spoke in support of the motion. I use this opportunity to invite the Minister to inform the House what he is doing to bring into action the intent of my motion referred to earlier this morning. Again, I thank the member for Burdekin for allowing me to join him in this important debate.
