

Question on Notice
No. 1494
Asked on Wednesday 29 November 2006

Mrs Attwood asked the Minister for Public Works, Housing and Information and Communication Technology (MR SCHWARTEN) –

QUESTION:

With reference to water recycling which is a topic of great concern to residents of the Mount Ommaney Electorate –

Will he outline the available opportunities to recycle water in public housing in Queensland?

ANSWER:

The Department of Housing is conscious of the need to reduce water consumption in its property portfolio. It is also conscious of the need for the most appropriate and cost-effective solution to be found when deciding on products and/or materials to be used.

The Department of Housing's Home Water Saving Scheme has commenced a 12 month program to install water flow restrictors to the cold water taps of major plumbing outlets in the bathroom, laundry and kitchens of departmental houses as well as install AAA-Rated shower roses at a cost of \$5.2m.

The department installs three-star rated water efficient shower roses, taps and dual flush toilet cisterns in all new construction and in existing dwellings when replacement is necessary or when modifications and upgrades are undertaken. Additionally the department provides information and advice to tenants on how to employ water saving strategies.

Department of Housing tenants as is the case with other Queenslanders can employ methods of recycling water, such as reusing waste water from activities such as showers or washing clothes, to water plants. However, the Department of Housing does not install grey water recycling or install rainwater tanks.

At a time of unprecedented housing demand as more and more people are forced out of the private rental market, the costs involved are prohibitive when balanced against the responsibility to house people in housing need.

However, in the case of rainwater tanks Department of Housing tenants like other residents can claim a rebate to install their own rainwater tanks, provided they have obtained written approval from their local Department of Housing Area Office Manager. Tenants wishing to claim a rebate should contact the Department of Natural Resources and Water on 1800 243 585. Currently rebates do not apply to greywater recycling systems for Department of Housing tenants.