

Question on Notice
No. 1941
Asked on Thursday 15 November 2007

MS MALE asked the Minister for Main Roads and Local Government (MR PITT) –

QUESTION:

Would he outline what initiatives the Department of Local Government offers to help households, councils and businesses minimise the use of our precious water resources?

ANSWER:

The Department of Local Government, Sport and Recreation (DLGSR) provides a range of initiatives and programs to assist councils, businesses and householders to save water.

The State Government has paid \$30.6M to the Home WaterWise Service, which is being delivered by Local Government Infrastructure Services. The Service is available to South East Queensland residents and involves a home visit and audit by a registered plumber, as well as the provision of over \$150 worth of plumbing advice and devices (including a water efficient showerhead and tap aerators) and the repair of up to three leaking taps, at a cost to the homeowner of \$20.

As at 31 October 2007, more than 158,000 retrofits had been completed by this successful initiative, representing estimated water savings of in excess of 9ML per day. This is the equivalent of nine Olympic size swimming pools in water savings each day. The Home WaterWise Service exceeded the target identified in the amended *Water Regulation 2002* by over two months.

The State also recently provided \$8.35M to Local Government Infrastructure Services to deliver the One to One Program. This program involved a marketing campaign, self assessment process and generation of a customised water savings plan for South East Queensland households consuming more than 800L per day. Preliminary advice from the Queensland Water Commission indicates that the program has been successful, with approximately 75% of high consumption households reducing their usage to below 800L per day, equating to water savings of approximately 32ML per day.

DLGSR also provides subsidies to councils to implement a range of water-related projects, including water recycling projects, under the Water and Sewerage Program, and to develop and implement best practice demand management strategies that reduce consumption and systemic loss of drinking water through the Reduction of Potable Water Loss and Consumption Program.

Councils are also required to carry out thorough planning and effectively manage their water resources, including identifying consumption reduction targets, in order to be eligible for funding assistance.

DLGSR has also provided \$32M to subsidise works being conducted by South East Queensland councils to reduce leakages and pressure within their water distribution networks under the South East Queensland Pressure and Leakage Management Project. This project, which is being coordinated by Local Government Infrastructure Services on behalf of the State and participating councils, is currently saving over 25ML/day of potable water.

DLGSR also provides financial assistance to help businesses save water through the Business Water Efficiency Program, which is being delivered by South East Queensland Water Corporation.

A total of \$40M has been provided for this program in South East Queensland. As at 31 October 2007, water savings of 14.8ML per day were reported by South East Queensland Water Corporation as having been achieved by eligible businesses since July 2006.

This program has been very popular with SEQ businesses, as evidenced by the large volume of funding applications received. A total of 434 project applications had been received from businesses at the end of October, with the potential to save 18.87ML of water per day when implemented. Sixty-four of these project applications have already been completed. A further 230 of those 434 applications have been approved for funding.

As a 2006 election commitment, the government committed a further \$15M to extend the Business Water Efficiency Program State-wide in order to promote and support the implementation of efficient water practices in the business sector across Queensland. The State-wide Business Water Efficiency Program is being steadily rolled out across the State and will achieve a targeted saving of up to 8ML per day of potable water.

DLGSR is committed to assisting councils, businesses and householders to effectively manage and conserve our precious water resources.