# Home Water Efficiency Audit

Do you know how much water your household uses? A home water audit like this can help. By monitoring how much water you use and fixing leaks promptly, you can save water and money. You can also help to protect our rivers - all town water in our shire is sourced from the Bellinger River, or the Bielsdown River in Dorrigo.

Just follow the steps and add the information you collect to the Audit Form as you go.

## STEP 1

### How Much Water Do We Use?

- Check your water meter which is typically located in the ground outside, towards the front of the property.
- Check how much water your home is using each month by making monthly water meter readings to compare to monthly bills. You can quickly detect any unexplained increases in water use that might indicate a possible leak.

## STEP 2

### Where Do We Use Water?

- Complete the Household Checklist below using the water usage calculator on the next page.

| Water Use | No. of people in home (A) | No. of uses per week (B) | Litres of water per use (C) | Total per week (AxBxC) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Toilet | | | | |
| Shower | | | | |
| Bath | | | | |
| Teeth cleaning | | | | |
| Shaving | | | | |
| Washing hands | | | | |
| Drinking | | | | |
| Washing dishes | | | | |
| Dishwasher | | | | |
| Washing machine | | | | |
| Inside cleaning such as showers, floors | | | | |
| Washing cars/bikes/ boats | | | | |
| Washing pets | | | | |
| Watering gardens/lawns | | | | |
| Outside cleaning such as driveway, balconies | | | | |
| Pool/spa/water features | | | | |
| Other | | | | |
| **Total** | | | | |

*You can use additional sheets of paper if you need more space for all your water using places.*

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## Water Usage Calculator

| Location | End use | Litres of water used |
|---|---|---|
| **Bathroom** | Toilet:<br>dual flush 6/3 (or 4.5/3)<br>single flush only | 3 litres per half flush or 6/4.5 litres per full flush<br>11 litres per flush |
| | Shower | 6–11 litres per minute |
| | Bath | 120 litres per filled bath |
| | Brushing teeth:<br>with water running<br>with a cup | 3 litres per minute<br>0.5 litre per person |
| | Shaving:<br>with water running<br>with a cup | 3 litres per minute<br>0.5 litre per person |
| | Washing hands with water running | 3 litres per minute |
| | Cleaning showers:<br>with the shower running<br>with a bucket | 6–11 litres per minute<br>9 litres per filled bucket |
| **Kitchen** | Washing dishes:<br>by hand<br>dishwasher | 15 litres per half-filled sink<br>7 litres per load (5 star WELS rated)<br>Older dishwashers up to 25 litres per load |
| | Drinking | 2 litres per person per day |
| **Laundry** | Washing clothes:<br>by hand | 22 litres per half-filled laundry trough |
| | washing machine*<br>(e.g. 6kg load capacity) | 30 litres per load (6 star WELS rated)<br>88 litres per load (3 star WELS rated)<br>Older machines up to 180 litres per load |
| **Outdoors** | Washing outdoors, including pets, furniture, car:<br>using running hose<br>using a filled bucket | 15 litres per minute<br>9 litres per bucket |
| | Watering gardens:<br>with a hose<br>with a sprinkler | 15 litres per minute<br>9–15 litres per minute |
| | Hosing driveways/pavements | 15 litres per minute |
| | Topping up pool/spa/water features: | 15 litres per minute |
| **Leaks** | Leaks:<br>slow-dripping tap leak<br>toilet cistern leak<br>pool/spa small leak | 3–27 litres per day<br>10 litres per day (barely visible) to 260 litres per day (large)<br>130 litres per week |

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## STEP 3

## Do you have any leaks?

### 💧 Check Taps for Leaks

- Place a measuring cup (that measures millilitres) under the leaky tap and start a stop-watch.
- Leave the cup under the leaky tap for 15 minutes.
- Note down how many millilitres were captured, then calculate how many litres per hour the tap is leaking.
- Together you can work out how much water would be wasted in 1 day, in 1 week and in 1 year.

### 💧 Check Toilets for Leaks

- Remove the cistern cover and pour in enough food colouring to change the colour of the water in the cistern.
- Wait for a few minutes to see if the colour of the water in bowl changes colour.

### 💧 Check How Much Water Your Toilets Use

- Remove the cistern cover and shut off the water supply to the toilet. Identify where the cistern fill point is.
- Flush the toilet to empty the cistern.
- Refill the cistern to the fill point with a measuring jug and calculate how much water is used with each flush.

### 💧 Check your Tap Flow Rates

- Place a 10ltr bucket under the tap you are checking, turn it on midway and start a stop-watch.
- Leave the bucket under the tap for 30 seconds only.
- Note down how many litres were captured in 30 secs and double it to calculate a minute, then you can calculate how many litres per hour the tap provides (flow rate).

  **A general guide for flow rates is as follows:**
  - **Sink taps flow should not exceed 12 litres per minute**
  - **Hand basin taps flow should not exceed 6 litres per minute**
  - **Shower flows, if you have them, should not exceed 9 litres per minute**

## STEP 4

## Are your appliances water-efficient?

💧 If your appliances are reasonably new, the manufacturer's product information will tell you how much water they use.

💧 When buying new appliances, choose those with a higher water efficiency rating where possible. The water rating label on the product will help you identify the most water-efficient products—look for the product with the most stars. (Check WELS rating at www.waterrating.gov.au)

### Check Efficiency of old Appliances

💧 If your appliances are older, you can use your water meter to work out how much water each appliance uses.

💧 To do this, ensure all water-using devices are turned off and then record the water meter reading.
- Use only one appliance while all other water-using devices remain switched off.
- When the appliance is finished, check the meter reading again.
- The difference in the meter readings is the amount of water, in litres, used by the appliance.

💧 Alternatively, contact a licensed plumber to help determine the water consumption of individual appliances and your overall household.