

FAQs WaterSmart Program

Supporting businesses, councils and organisations to become more water efficient.

WaterSmart is a Victorian government-funded program, assisting businesses, councils and other organisations to become more water efficient.

Westernport Water is delivering the WaterSmart Program and will target high water using non-residential organisations that provide important and essential services or opportunities to the community, and which have the potential to make significant efficiency savings, including hospitals, councils, aged care facilities and some industrial sites.

Organisations who reduce their water use are not only more sustainable but have lower water bills. If hot water use is also reduced, they also use less energy and therefore have lower energy bills and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

What is WaterSmart?

WaterSmart aims to help eligible organisations:

- understand and monitor site water use
- identify opportunities to either minimise or substitute potable water use
- take action to use water more efficiently
- reduce water and energy costs

WaterSmart is providing funding for eligible organisations under three streams:

- 1) Stream 1 - Water Use Monitoring through data logger technology via the VicFacilities online portal
- 2) Stream 2 - Water Use Audits or Undetected Leak Identification to identify how and where to improve water use efficiencies
- 3) Stream 3 – Sporting Ground Audits, Upgrades and Retrofits to reduce potable water use

Stream 1: Digital Monitoring

What is being funded in Stream 1 and what are the benefits?

The WaterSmart program assists eligible organisations in monitoring and understanding their water use through data loggers or digital water meters which are monitored through the VicFacilities dashboard. Digital monitoring allows organisations to better understand how they use water and help identify leaks or other forms of water waste at their sites.

Digital metering will be offered to identified non-residential customers who do not have any existing digital metering or monitoring in place.

Westernport Water will arrange:

- one or more data loggers to be installed at your site or multiple sites
- online access to the Vic Facilities portal to visualise water use at 15-minute intervals
- membership to the VicFacilities portal for an initial three-year period
- high water usage alerts to be sent by email to your designated facility manager(s) or contact person

Water monitoring can benefit your organisation by:

- allowing you to see how much water your organisation is using day to day, to help you identify ways to save water (and thereby reduce water bills and energy bills where hot water is reduced)
- detect any abnormal water usage almost immediately (i.e., sudden high-water usage during non-operational hours) to help identify leaks or malfunctioning equipment
- save money and reduce water wastage by allowing you to fix leaks and equipment quickly
- improve on your reporting obligations

Stream 2: Water Audits or Undetected Leak Identification

What is being funded in Stream 2 and what are the benefits?

For those already monitoring their water use, a detailed water efficiency audit may be provided to identify how and where to best to improve water efficiency. Water efficiency audits can identify opportunities to save water through, for example, upgrading fixtures or equipment or changing water use behaviours.

The undetected leak identification service is available for customers who have received a high-water usage alert and have confirmed no visible water loss.

Water efficiency audits will only be offered to high to medium water using non-residential customers who have existing digital meter or monitoring in place.

Identified non-residential customers who already have digital metering or monitoring in place may be eligible for a detailed water audit by a professional auditor.

Water efficiency audits will help your organisation to identify ways to be more water efficient and potential cost savings. A water audit typically involves an assessment of your past and current water usage through water bills, site water monitoring data and on-site walk-through. The audit will identify all areas where water is being used and identify opportunities for more efficient usage.

Water efficiency audits provide your organisation with the potential to:

- reduce operational costs
- improve operational efficiencies by reducing water wastage
- avoid potential equipment damage or repair costs by identifying leaks
- reduce unnecessary potable water use and support sustainable consumption of local water resources.

The WaterSmart Program will fund one undetected leak identification service for eligible customers who have received a high-water usage alert and have confirmed no signs of visible water loss. A licensed plumber will conduct the leak detection, but repairs are not covered by the program.

Stream 3: Sporting Ground Audits, Upgrades and Retrofits

What is being funded in Stream 3 and what are the benefits?

Stream 3 of the WaterSmart program supports the Victorian Government's Central and Gippsland Region Sustainable Water Strategy by providing grants to open space managers for water efficiency audits and upgrades at community sporting grounds.

The initiative aims to assist 13 sites within the Westernport Water region by conducting comprehensive water audits, identifying opportunities to reduce potable water use, and implementing small-scale retrofits. These audits will be carried out by qualified contractors and adhere to best practice guidelines, with funding available for necessary upgrades such as improved irrigation systems, turf enhancements, and water-saving fixtures.

Water efficiency audits, retrofits and upgrades provide your organisation with the potential to:

- Bring efficient, innovative water management solutions to community facilities, ensuring they are sustainable and fit for the future
- reduce operational costs
- improve operational efficiencies by reducing water wastage
- reduce unnecessary potable water use and support sustainable consumption of local water resources

The sporting ground audit can include the entire site boundary, including water use in any indoor facilities such as changerooms, spectator stands and club facilities to improve water efficiency across all sporting ground areas.

Is My Organisation Eligible?

WaterSmart is targeted at high to medium water using non-residential customers including councils, hospitals, aged care facilities, organisations and industrial sites with large water-saving potential.

Westernport Water will invite selected non-residential customers to participate in either Stream 1, 2 or 3. Eligibility criteria and Mandatory Clauses apply to each Stream.

Important Dates

The WaterSmart Program is currently funded to end June 2024. You must register for either Stream 1, 2 or 3 between 1st of May 2023 and 30 June 2025. Products and services for each Stream must be supplied and completed by 30th September 2025.

Further Information

For more information on the WaterSmart program, please visit our dedicated web page at www.westernportwater.com.au/our-community/waterSMART, which includes downloadable application forms. For more information on VicFacilities, please visit www.vicfacilities.com.au.

Apply Now

Westernport Water will invite selected non-residential customers to participate in the WaterSmart Program. To apply, please contact our team on the details below.

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