

spindrift.

MARGARET RIVER



Rainwater Tank Initiative

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Rainwater tanks are a great way to reduce your dependency on mains water. When plumbed into your home the benefits can be even greater – saving up to 20% of the average in-house water use each year and reducing your water bill.

Good water management is not only a great way to save money on your household bills but has much broader environmental benefits. When you use water wisely, you help to preserve water drinking supplies, reduce water and wastewater treatment costs and the amount of energy used to treat, pump, and heat water. This lowers energy demand, which helps prevent air pollution.

Spindrift encourages the installation of water tanks to every home and provides incentives to do so. The installation of water tanks does not only support a sustainable environment, but also provides benefits to each homeowner.

What are the benefits to me?

In addition to supporting a sustainable and environmentally sound home, taking responsibility of your own household water consumption will:

- Cut your water bill by reducing your consumption of mains water
- Allow you the freedom to water your garden or wash your car when you want to
- Help to preserve drinking water supplies and ease the burden on wastewater treatment plants
- Help to decrease stormwater runoff, thereby helping to reduce local flooding and scouring of creeks.
- Contribute to the more sustainable use of our finite resource
- Minimise the environmental footprint of urban living
- Reduce the risk of pollution entering natural waterways through stormwater run offs
- Value-adding for your property
- Provide and enjoy water that does not contain contaminants (from the soil) that are normally found in ground water and other sources

Where can I use the rainwater?

Rainwater tanks are great for watering the garden and washing the car. However, connecting a tank to your toilet or your laundry is where the real water savings can be made. This is because it can be used year-round and not just during the dry months, when you would typically use the stored rainwater water to hand water your garden. A typical household can reduce its mains water requirements by around 70% if connected to the toilet and washing machine alone, and up to 85% if connected to the hot water system.

Plumbing your rainwater tank into your home ensures the rainwater is used on a regular basis and the tank captures more rainfall during the year.

Can you drink the water from a rainwater tank?

Water used for household purposes such as drinking, food preparation or bathing should meet water quality guidelines in order to protect you and your family's health. The water should be free of harmful micro-organisms or harmful levels of chemicals. By far the greatest potential risk to your health comes from contamination of water.

Rainwater can be protected by the installation of a First Flush Diverter to divert the first flow of water from the roof, so that the tank does not collect it. A mesh covering can also be installed along the roof line to prevent leaves or other objects entering the pipes.

Regular maintenance of the whole rainwater system, from roof to tank to tap, is the key to providing good water quality for your home.

For further information, visit the Western Australian Department of Health at www.public.health.wa.gov.au.

Will the water tank save me money?

Yes, once you have a rainwater tank installed, you will begin saving money on your water bill each month. Every drop of water saved in a household's consumption of the mains water supply means direct savings in water charges. That could mean 85% off a bill. The greatest water savings are made by supplying appliances like washing machines and toilets, which use large volumes of water all year round. These two items (toilets & washing machines) use around 250 litres per day or half of all the water consumed in the average household.

How do I choose what type of tank I need?

Rainwater tanks vary in size, design, materials and price, and pumps and filters may be required. It is important to choose a rainwater tank system to suit your needs and budget.

The size tank you require will also depend on space available, consider checking your approximate roof space and annual rainfall as a guideline for how much water you could harvest. Increasing the tank size does not greatly improve the efficiency factor as it is based on the number of refills related to the rainfall pattern in this period.

For further information, visit www.westcoastpoly.com.au or contact your builder.

Where will it go?

Deciding where to place your tank will be greatly influenced by how much space you have. Dependent on lot size and shape, there are a variety of ways a water tank system could be installed. Your tank will require stable base, so select a smooth, firm, level surface on which to site the tank (paving, concrete and sand are all suitable). Tanks can be installed next to the house, or under it, on the ground or below it. Many designs fit under the eaves of your house and come in a colour to blend in with your house colour so you barely even know it is there. Your architect or builder can help you find the best fit for you.

When should I install a water tank?

The best time to install a rainwater tank is when you're building your house. This advanced planning will reduce costs by having the pipework, GPO and base for your tank in place prior to installation of your rainwater harvesting package.

For further information, visit www.westcoastpoly.com.au or contact your builder.

How do I get a water tank?

There are a number of reputable local water tank suppliers who would be happy to help you with your tank selection. Visit www.westcoastpoly.com.au or ask your builder.

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