



Sustainable Living at Home: Home Water Action Challenge

NAME.....

The Home Water Action Challenge is a guide for you to commit to lower water use actions that are applicable in your home. The actions range from no cost, simple behaviour changes achievable now to actions that require more steps, planning and cost - but importantly they ALL lead to reductions in your water use.

Taking the Action Challenge is easy:

1. Read through each section below and identify the actions that relate to your home and lifestyle.
2. Indicate whether you plan to undertake this action in your household (Y/N).
3. Identify what type of action this is for you: **immediate and/or no cost**, **low cost / short term**, **longer term** or other actions.
4. For actions that are immediate and no cost, indicate up to 3 actions that can be undertaken before the next SLAHminar. These actions form the basis for your Home Water Action Plan.
5. Bring your completed Home Water Action Challenge to the Travel Wise SLAHminar (9 April) to discuss your actions and achievements. For more information on actions visit the SLAH website links, at www.portphillip.vic.gov.au/slah .

Actions	I/We will undertake this action (Yes / No)	Action Type <i>Immediate / No Cost</i> <i>Low Cost / Short Term</i> <i>Longer Term</i> <i>Other</i>	To be completed by (Date)	I/We have achieved this Action (Yes / No)
Bathroom				
I will check my bathroom taps and shower for leaks and drips and repair if needed.				
I will ensure all bathroom drains have plugs that fit snugly and do not leak.				
I will install an aerator/flow restrictor in my bathroom taps (not bath as it is volume reliant).				
I will use a water glass when brushing my teeth rather than a running tap.				
I will use a plug when using my bathroom tap for hand washing, face washing, etc.				



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I will use the sink and plug or a bowl for rinsing my razor, rather than a running tap.				
I will turn the tap off when brushing my teeth and wet your brush and use a glass for rinsing instead.				
I will install a 3-star (or higher) rated showerhead in my shower and reduce the flow to 9 litres of water per minute.				
I will take shorter showers and limit time spent in the shower to soap up, wash down, and rinse off. Shorter showers save on energy costs from heating water as well as saving water.				
I will install a shower timer to limit my shower time to 4 minutes (or less).				
I will shave my legs before taking a shower and use running shower water to rinse off.				
I will use a bucket in the shower to capture water while it is heating and use this water for my garden or balcony plants, handwashing or toilet flushing				
I will decrease the number of baths I take, using the shower instead.				
I will only fill the bathtub with as much water as needed, and use less for kids and pets.				
I will bucket used bath water onto the garden or balcony plants. (Check that soaps and detergents in the water will not harm garden plants.)				
I will check the temperature as I fill the bath to avoid wastefully adding extra water to get the correct temperature after the bath is at the right level.				



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I will insulate the first few metres of piping from our hot water system. This avoids wasting water while waiting for hot water to flow through and saves energy.				
I will consider an instantaneous water heater if my existing water heater is located some distance to the bathroom. (Talk to a Green Plumber first to make sure it will work adequately with your 3-star showerhead.)				
I will make sure my hot water system thermostat is not set too high to avoid wastefully adding cold water to reduce the temperature of very hot water.				
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Toilet				
I will reduce the water use of my single flush toilet by placing a bottle filled with water in my cistern.				
I will check for slow leaks in my cistern by putting food dye into the cistern, waiting 15 minutes, then checking if coloured water is in the bowl.				
I will check my toilet plumbing for any leaks or drips and organise repair if needed.				
I will not flush my toilet after every use - unless necessary.				
I will install a dual flush toilet with AAA (or better) rating.				
I will reduce the water use of my single flush toilet by installing a device to reduce flush, (e.g. Waterwizz, Flexiflush or Retroflush).				



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Laundry				
I will check my laundry taps and washing machine hoses for leaks and drips and repair if needed.				
I will ensure all laundry sinks have plugs that fit snugly and do not leak.				
I will use a plug – or a bucket - when using the laundry tap.				
I will investigate purchasing AAAA or higher rating washing machine.				
When handwashing, I will wash lighter coloured items first and reuse this water for darker colours as much as possible.				
I will manually re-use my final rinse water from my machine and handwashing, for watering my non-edible plants. (Take care to use a detergent with an ‘NP’ rating for low salts, phosphorous and nitrogens)..				
I will wash my clothes in cold water.				
I will run the clothes washer only with a full load.				
I will hang the washing on a clothes line rather than use a clothes dryer				
I will use my washing machine only when full and on ‘economy’ cycle				
I will consider buying a washing machine that has a 4-star rating (or better) and check the water efficiency performance of any product before buying				
I will adjust the water level to suit the size of the wash load – (some new water efficient models will do this automatically).				
I will use the sud-saver option on my washing machine when I have several loads to wash.				



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Kitchen				
I will check my kitchen taps for leaks and drips and repair if needed.				
I will ensure all kitchen sinks have plugs that fit snugly and do not leak.				
I will install an aerator or flow restrictor in my kitchen taps.				
I will use a plugged sink or a basin to save running the tap continuously for rinsing dishes, dish cloths, washing hands, etc.				
I will only run the dishwasher when I have a full load.				
I will capture 'warm-up' water for use on plants, rinsing dishes, washing fruit and vegetables, or other cleaning tasks.				
I will avoid wasting drinking water from a running tap, collect it in a bottle or jug and store it in the fridge until it is cool enough to drink.				
I will avoid using my in-sink garbage-disposal unit and put suitable food scraps into a compost bin or worm farm rather than down the kitchen sink.				
I will consider buying a dishwasher that has a 4-star rating (or better)				
When washing dishes with dual sinks, I will fill the second sink with rinsing water to avoid rinsing under a running tap.				
I will use washing up liquid sparingly as this will reduce the amount of rinsing required when washing dishes by hand.				
When boiling vegetables, I will use enough water to cover them and keep the lid on the saucepan.				
I will avoid using running water to defrost frozen food and place food in the refrigerator to defrost overnight.				



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Garden				
I will comply with all garden watering restrictions.				
I will try watering my plants only once or twice a week - to not only save water - but also encourage them to develop deeper roots and become more resistant to hot weather.				
I will not water my plants or garden before testing how moist/dry the soil is to see if they actually need watering.				
I will improve my soil's ability to hold water through adding organic matter such as compost or additives such as water crystals or flakes. (This is particularly useful in sandy soils like those in City of Port Phillip.)				
I will check the weather report before watering my garden to help me assess water needs.				
I will use (and top up) mulch in pots and on garden beds. (A layer of 75mm thick can reduce water loss from the soil through evaporation by as much as 70%).				
I will weed more frequently to reduce competition for water in my garden.				
I will investigate replacing high water using to low water using and locally indigenous plants in my garden.				
I will turn off my automatic watering system when it is not required (e.g. after rainfall).				
I will ensure my automatic watering system has a rain sensor to avoid it coming on during rain.				
I will investigate drip systems for my garden irrigation system, which direct water to root zones (and are best laid under mulch).				



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Washing Cars, Vehicles and Driveways				
I will comply with all water regulations and use a broom, brush or rake to sweep and clean outdoor paths and paving instead of hosing them down.				
I will halve how often I wash my car and other vehicles.				
I will comply with water regulations and wash cars, boats and other vehicles on the lawn using a bucket - not a hose.				
I will use a waterless car wash or a commercial car wash that recycles its wash water (or wash by hand as above).				
I will use captured 'warm-up' water from inside the home or treated greywater to wash vehicles.				
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Rainwater Tank				
I will investigate the uses of rainwater and the installation of a rainwater tank for my home				
I will remove leaves from the roof and gutters to improve the quality of water in				
I will install a rainwater tank				
Greywater System				
I will investigate the uses of greywater and the installation of a greywater system for my home				
I will comply with regulations and not store untreated greywater for over 24 hours.				



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Pools and Spas				
I will install a pool blanket, pool cover to reduce evaporation				
I will increase shading over the pool to reduce evaporation				
I will backwash only when necessary.				
I will check regularly for cracks and leaks.				
I will keep the pool and filters clean to reduce frequency of filter backwashing				
I will encourage pool behaviour so that water stays in the pool				



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Other Actions				
I will undertake a water audit (via South East Water or a Green Plumber) to investigate water efficiency and reduction measures in my home				
I will check for household leaks at the water meter. To detect a leak, ensure all taps are turned off. Check your water meter and note the reading. Then check the reading again after about three hours. If no water has been used, the reading should be the same. If the meter has moved, you have a leak that needs to be found and fixed.				
I will check for leaking pipes and get repaired if needed.				
I will look for information about the water efficiency performance of any product when making a purchase.				
I will investigate installing a diverting valve or a hot water saving system, (e.g. a Chilli Pepper or ReadyHot).				
I will assess (or undertake a professional assessment) of my outlet, soil, plants and detergents to determine if my home is suitable for a grey water re-use system.				
I will report any breaches of water regulations that I see, to South East Water on 9552 3000 or the relevant authority in other areas.				
I will re-use the 'old' nitrogen and phosphorous-rich water on my plants when cleaning my fish tank.				
I will talk with members of my home about this Home Water Action Challenge and encourage their participation in the Actions				



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What other Actions can you commit to undertake?

Actions	I/We will undertake this action (Yes / No)	Action Type Immediate / No Cost Low Cost / Short Term Longer Term Other	To be completed by (Date)	I/We have achieved this Action (Yes / No)
Other Actions				

You have finished the Home Water Action Challenge.

Please bring your completed Home Water Action Challenge to the Waste Wise SLAHminar (November 19) to discuss your actions and achievements.

Disclaimer

The Home Water Action Challenge has been based on information from www.savewater.com.au as at March 2008. The information contained within this document is understood to be correct at the time of printing and is intended to provide guidance to participants of the Sustainable Living At Home Program. Participants should consult other information sources directly regarding the appropriateness of actions with respect to circumstances beyond the control of the program, such as climactic conditions, changes in cost of action, appropriateness of actions in homes, and the installation of products. The City of Port Phillip accepts no liability whatsoever to any person for injury, loss or damage that may arise in connection with any use or reliance on this information.