



## Water Policy

Policy Number: POL-0007                      Date Adopted: 26 May 2017  
Version: 1.0                                      Review Date: 26 May 2020

### INTENT/PURPOSE

Weipa Town Authority (WTA) has responsibility for regulation and public guidance to foster the sensible use of water resources within its area of responsibility.

The intent of this policy is to establish a framework for reasonable water usage and appropriate water administration at Weipa.

The policy applies to:

- (a) the Authority operational activities, properties and facilities; and
- (b) residential, commercial and industrial properties,

which are connected to a water supply distribution network in Weipa.

Guidelines for administration of relevant aspects of Weipa's water resources and infrastructure follow.

### POLICY

#### **Water Conservation in WTA**

1. Building and infrastructure projects are to be designed to include water efficient fixtures, appliances and irrigation systems.
2. When existing fixtures and appliances are to be replaced, water efficient fixtures and appliances, will be installed.
3. Opportunity for alternative water supply, such as rainwater tanks and effluent reuse, will be considered in building and infrastructure projects.
4. Incidents, such as pipe breakages and irrigation system malfunction, will be responded to as soon as practicable.
5. Appropriate water conservation management practices and procedures will be identified and implemented.
6. Employees, relevant contractors and lessees of properties and facilities, will be provided training on water conservation practices.

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7. Water policy will be reviewed from time to time to reflect changes in community expectations, and changes in state and federal government legislative, policy and guidelines.

### **Water Meters**

1. A water meter is to be installed wherever water is supplied to an individual household, a commercial venture, or an industrial user.
2. The meter will be used to charge the rate payer for the volume of water taken.
3. When an application to connect a property to the water supply distribution main is made, the type of meter to be installed is to be specified for approval as well.
4. A water supply without a meter is an unauthorised connection and the rate payer is to have a meter installed as soon as practicable.
5. On request, the Authority will procure and install an appropriate meter at cost.
6. The meter is to be installed at the property boundary, on the street verge and not in the property itself.
7. Inside the property boundary, any sub-meters, such as for sub-letting, are not the responsibility of the Authority.
8. Access to the meter is to be maintained, such that water usage can be read in an efficient manner.
9. Once operational, the meter is owned, maintained and replaced by the Authority.

### **Water Restriction**

1. Water supply to any or all properties may be restricted because of climatic conditions, for conservation purposes, or in the public interest.
2. Restriction in the supply or usage of water could be in hours, premises, purposes, method, volume, specific rate payers, or types of rate payer.
3. Rate payers will be made aware of the demand-management strategy of which restriction is a part.
4. Rate payers will be made aware of any Ministerial or regulatory direction which requires the restriction.
5. Rate payers will receive notice of the restriction in a timely and appropriate manner, unless an emergency requires expedient communication.
6. Restrictions come into effect at least a day after rate payers have been notified.
7. On request, exceptions to the restrictions might be granted for special reasons, such as essential works, community events, and risk to public health and safety.

### **Water Sprinklers and Irrigation Systems**

1. Rate payers are to be aware that the highest demand for town water supply in Weipa occurs from 18:00 to 21:00.
2. Neither manual nor automatic systems for irrigation or sprinkling are to be operated during this peak demand period.
3. Rate payers are to be aware that evaporation from soil, plants and waterbodies is dependent on solar radiation, air temperature, air humidity, and wind speed.
4. Above-surface systems with timers are:

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- (a) to be set to water at night, with enough time before sunrise to allow water to soak into the ground, as well as to precede the morning high demand period.
  - (b) are permitted to operate for up to one hour each night, between 21:00 and 04:00.
5. Above-surface manually-controlled sprinklers and irrigation systems are presently permitted to operate between 06:30 and 08:00.
  6. It is recognised that sub-surface drip irrigation systems deliver water directly to the root zone and that no water presents above the soil surface for evaporation.
  7. Sub-surface drip irrigation is preferred and has no special conditions for its water use.

### **Shallow Aquifer Water Bores**

1. Rate payers are to be aware that the shallow aquifer ground water in the Weipa region is mildly acidic. Untreated use of this water in household plumbing could affect metallic components such as copper pipes and lead solder, if present.
2. Rate payers are to be aware that salt water intrusion is an environmentally degrading effect which leaves land less than useful for most productive purposes.
2. The effect can be caused by using a bore to extract fresh ground water near an estuary. Volume taken, pumping rate, nearness to the estuary, soil permeability, and upstream fresh water influence its probability.
3. Professional advice is required to assess the viability of a shallow aquifer bore installation. Rate payers are advised to seek such advice when considering a bore on their land, particularly within half a kilometre from the estuaries.
4. State regulation applies to installing shallow aquifer water bores in Weipa.
5. At this time, the Authority has not found need for additional local law in this regard.

### **Recycled Water**

1. Recycled water produced from the treatment of sewage at waste water treatment plants is a positive resource.
2. Use of recycled water has likely benefits:
  - Improved use of resource
  - Improved social amenity from more water
  - Nutrient recycling
  - Reduced ecological impact of nutrients
  - Reduced potable water demand
3. Use of recycled water is supported for non-potable purposes only.
4. Recycled water must be treated to a fit-for-purpose standard.
5. Proposals for use of recycled water will be comprehensively risk-assessed.
6. Community consultation and engagement with stakeholders will be undertaken in the consideration of recycled water proposals.
7. Potentially, recycled water could be used for:
  - Industrial uses
  - Agricultural and horticultural uses
  - Irrigation of open spaces

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FURTHER INFORMATION

Public Works Co-ordinator

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