



water saving devices

green at heart
Your one-stop shop
for building sustainability



A typical house in Cairns uses about 200,000 litres of water each year. There are many ways to make your garden more water efficient including the use of rainwater and greywater around your home.

RAINWATER

Rainwater is a valuable natural resource that can be collected for use at your home. This can reduce your water bill, provide unrestricted water use and reduce the need for increased water infrastructure such as dams, water treatment plants and piping.

How do I select a rainwater tank that is right for me?

When choosing a rainwater tank there are many things to consider including average annual rainfall, the size of your roof and the needs of your house. As a general rule of thumb, we suggest nothing smaller than 4000L. Tanks are available in a range of materials and shapes including plastic, galvanised steel and concrete. The type of material selected will really depend on your budget and personal preference.

What can rainwater be used for?

There are two ways that rainwater tanks can be used in your home.

- Used only for the garden and therefore not plumbed to the house.
- Used to flush the toilet, in the laundry and also the garden. This will require a mains water top up to ensure that the tank never runs dry.

Did you know that 1mm of rain on 1m² of roof will collect 1 litre of water. Think about all the water going down the drain every time it rains!

Green at Heart can provide you with all the assistance you require to choose and install a tank, including council forms and regulations.

GREYWATER

Greywater is water generated from baths, showers, washbasins and laundries that can be reused on the lawn and garden. It can be either untreated (straight from the source) or treated by a greywater treatment plant.

What can I use greywater for?

Untreated greywater can be used on the lawn or garden by:

- Manual bucketing from the bathroom or laundry.
- Connecting a flexi-hose to the washing machine outlet.
- Seeking council approval for the installation of a greywater diversion device¹.

Treated greywater is produced by a treatment plant that collects, stores, treats and disinfects waste water to specific standards. The installation of a greywater treatment plant requires council approval. Once installed this greywater can be used for:

- Toilet flushing.
- Laundry.
- Vehicle wash down.
- Path and wall washing.
- Garden and lawn spray irrigation.

This system provides a limitless supply of recycled water for your home and will dramatically reduce your water bills.

Why not shower with a bucket! Collect the pre-heat water from the shower for use on your garden.

Safe use of greywater

- Do not let it pool on the ground or run into the neighbours' property.
- Use environmentally friendly washing powders and detergents that are low in phosphates.
- Don't store untreated greywater as this is both smelly and toxic.
- Avoid the use of greywater on the edible parts of vegetables, fruit and herbs.
- Do not use greywater when people in your house are sick or if washing soiled nappies or pet blankets².

Green at Heart has a registered green plumber who can assist with all your greywater needs.

WATER EFFICIENT APPLIANCES

A great way to reduce your water consumption is to install water efficient appliances and fixtures. Always check the star and water ratings of appliances before purchasing. For more information visit www.energyrating.gov.au

- Install a min of 3 star water-efficient showerhead.
- Upgrade the washing machine to one with at least a 4 star water efficiency rating. Front-loading machines are typically the most water efficient.
- Installing a new 4star dual-flush toilet (3/4.5L).
- Upgrade to a water efficient dishwasher.
- Install tap aerators and flow regulators to reduce water consumption.
- Install a hot water recirculation system.

rebates

A \$500 Federal Government rebate is available for the installation of a rainwater tank that is installed for flushing toilets and laundry use and also for greywater treatment systems.

Please find the details of the rebate and the application form at: www.environment.gov.au/water/programs/nrgi/index.html

1. <http://www.dip.qld.gov.au/sustainable-housing/greywater.html>

2. http://www.dip.qld.gov.au/resources/laws/queensland-development-code/factsheets/Greywater_in_the_home_fact_sheet_Dec_07.pdf