

Gardeners urged to plan a crab dinner as winter sprinkler ban comes into play

Gardeners are topping up their mulch and shutting down their reticulation in preparation for the annual winter sprinkler ban which starts on Wednesday June 1.

The ban applies to all scheme and bore water users in Perth, Mandurah and most parts of the South West and Great Southern. Hand watering and maintenance testing of bores is permitted, but anyone using their sprinklers between now and 31 August could face a \$100 fine.

Make sure your garden is ready for the cold spell by applying good quality mulch and compost. If the soil is dry and waxy after summer, use a wetting agent to help it hold moisture.

If there is rain around, it is important to avoid fertilising your garden. Heavy rains wash the fertiliser out of your soil

and through the stormwater system, where it collects in our rivers, estuaries and flows into the ocean. The build-up feeds algae, upsets the environment and damages local fish and shellfish, including our tasty Blue Swimmer crabs.

In Spring, when it's time to feed your plants, choose an organic, slow release fertiliser and don't use more than the recommended dose.

The South West Catchments Council has some great tips to help you maintain a crab-safe garden and some delicious crustacean recipes to try. Check out their Save Our Crabs website at www.homeriverocean.com.au.



New pensioner rebates available

Pensioners living in private rental accommodation can apply for a rebate on their water bills for the first time from 1 July this year.

The new subsidy could mean a saving of 50 percent for people who use up to 350 kilolitres of water over the financial year.

To apply, pick up an application form from our customer service desk or call us on 08 9781 0500.

COLOURFUL VALVE BOXES AN AUSTRALIAN FIRST

Keep your eyes open for these colourful lids that are popping up around town.

Pioneered by Busselton Water, the moulded synthetic valve box covers are a cheaper, lighter and lower maintenance alternative to the traditional cast iron boxes, which went out of vogue when the foundry that produced them closed.

Busselton Water worked closely with the company that designed and manufactures the valve box covers



and took delivery of its first order last year. The covers are now in use by water utilities around the country.

The colour coding is meaningful too. Blue is for drinking water, purple for non-potable water and brown is for sewer valves.



BUSSELTON WATER

Emergency Helpline 9781 0500

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New pipelines bring a continuous flow to town

Water has started flowing through two new pipelines that will significantly improve supply reliability for customers in West Busselton and Vasse.

One of the new mains connects Busselton Water's three water treatment plants. If one treatment plant goes offline, water can be quickly diverted from another plant, avoiding any supply interruption for customers.

Busselton Water CEO Chris Elliott said the other new main was critical infrastructure to support the fast-growing residential and light industrial areas in Vasse, Newtown and Kealy.

"For the first time, the new dual supply infrastructure means we can divert water from one side of town to the other, so customers aren't without water while the problem is being fixed. This is critical in an emergency situation."

The upgrades involved installation of 2.5 kilometres of 300mm diameter pipeline along Rendezvous Road and 3.4km of 375mm diameter pipeline on Geographe Bay Road.



Big end of town tops up on water savings

Busselton Water is working with the region's biggest water users to find new ways to cut their consumption and potentially save them thousands of dollars a year.

Businesses that use more than 20,000 kilolitres of water annually are required by law to develop a water efficiency management plan.

A handful of local organisations, including many of the town's biggest tourist resorts, aged care facilities and hospital, fall into this category. Many have already taken significant, practical steps to cut their water use, such as upgrading to dual flush toilets, installing water efficient showerheads and changing cleaning and maintenance practices.

Busselton Water is now helping them find new ways to save water and can install sophisticated data loggers that track consumption patterns at five minute intervals and provide daily reports for analysis. If the water use remains consistently high, around the clock, it often suggests there are leaks.

Water losses can mean a double hit for businesses that pay for the water they use as well as a sewerage levy based on the amount of water they consume.

To find out how the Waterwise program can help your business, visit the website.



Paperless billing takes off

More and more customers are signing up to receive their water bills by email. It's a convenient way to save paper, help the environment and have your accounts filed neatly in your inbox.

If you would like your water bill to arrive electronically please fill out the Electronic Billing Authorisation form on our website.

Your new-look water bill is full of useful information to track your water use and help you save money.

Double dip on water savings

If you can reduce your consumption, you not only pay for a smaller amount of water but the rate per kilolitre could go down too, as this diagram shows.

There are six different pricing tiers. Depending on how much water you use in a year, you could be charged between 98 cents to \$2.96 per kilolitre. The rate you pay is calculated three times a year – every time you receive a new bill – and is based on the total you have used over the year so far.

The quota resets in July so now is a great time to prepare for the new year. If you are looking for easy tips to save water at your place, visit the waterwise page on our website.



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