

# Water use in public housing

The Department of Territory Families, Housing and Communities encourages responsible water use in public housing premises. At times, the Department is made aware of a high water use at a premises and may investigate why.

In accordance with your tenancy agreement and the *Residential Tenancies Act 1999*, the Department may ask you to pay for any water used above 500 kilolitres, measured between 1 October and 30 September of every year, if you live in a premises with a separate water meter. If you are issued with an excess water charge, you can contact your local Housing office to discuss further and be referred to tenancy support services, where available.

Tenants must notify the Department of any leaks or water damage to the property, as soon as possible. This includes leaking taps, constantly running toilet cisterns and dripping showerheads. The Department will repair or fix any issues causing high water use.

## How to reduce water use

Please call the maintenance call centre if you notice any of the following:

- Taps that will not turn off
- Dripping taps, or taps that are tight to turn
- The toilet keeps running after flushing
- Damp walls
- Leaking water mains and pipes.

Some tips on how to save water around your home:

- Keep showers short where possible
- Use water efficient appliances like washing machines that have a low water use rating
- Use less water for smaller loads in your washing machine
- Sweep driveways/paths instead of hosing them down with water
- Look at the weather. Plants don't need to be watered when it's been raining
- Water your garden in the evenings or early mornings. Water evaporates fast when it's very hot outside.

You can visit the following websites for hints and tips on how to use water more efficiently:

- Power and Water Living Water Smart website [livingwatersmart.com.au](http://livingwatersmart.com.au)
- Australian Government [www.energy.gov.au/households/water-efficiency](http://www.energy.gov.au/households/water-efficiency)

## How to check for leaks

Checking for leaks helps conserve water and avoids excess water use.

You can check for leaks by:

1. turning off all water sources in your home and any other appliances that water comes from
2. make sure no one uses any taps or flushes the toilets
3. go to your water meter and watch for any movement to your water meter reading.

Small leaks will take longer to show, so it is best if you don't use any water at the premises for approximately half an hour after you have turned off all the water in your home.

If the meter reading is the same after this time it is a good sign there is no leak.

## What to do if you find a leak

If you have or think you have a water leak, immediately contact the repairs and maintenance call centre on 1800 104 076.

A contractor may need to attend your home to find the problem.

You can also report any repairs and maintenance by visiting or contacting your local Housing office:

Alice Springs	(08) 8951 5344
Arafura Region	(08) 8995 5122
Greater Darwin	(08) 8999 8814
Katherine	(08) 8973 8513
Nhulunbuy	(08) 8987 0533
Palmerston	(08) 8999 4767
Tennant Creek	(08) 8962 4497