

Dear Sir/Madam,

We wish to put forward the following points/views on some of the issues covered in the Draft Report.

- We are in agreement that the fixed cost of water should be reduced with a substantial increase in the usage cost. In particular as (according to the report) approximately 50% of water is used on garden and outdoor use, the scale should not be linear but increase substantially to adequately reflect the high levels discretionary use of water.

We believe the two block tariff for fixed price along with the usage restructure to be the best option. The CSIRO correctly notes that water pricing has remained unchanged despite the continual drying of our climate.

The effect on large families from changing the water pricing structure to usage should not be significant as the discretionary usage shouldn't be substantially larger for a large family. The reported increase of \$60 annually is totally insignificant compared with other utility costs.

- We strongly disagree with the Water Corporations view to increasing the sprinkler usage to 3 days a week from 2006 /2007 onwards. The two day a week restrictions are adequate, there is barely a notable decline in the use of grass and other high water need plants in gardens. A reduction would only serve to discourage more responsible and appropriate garden choices for the dry and increasingly drier Perth climate. As the report states that about 50% of water usage is for the garden or outdoor, increasing the sprinkler usage to 3 days could potentially increase consumption by up to 25% of total water used. Furthermore if sprinkler bans are seen to be flexible this will discourage users from making long term and potentially costly changes to their usage patterns eg replacing gardens with more suitable plants, installing drip irrigation instead of inefficient sprinklers etc.
- We strongly disagree with the unrestricted and encouraged use of bore water. This leads to very irresponsible overuse. Bore users in our neighbourhood water everyday of the year, and at various times of the day. We live near the Bibra Lake Wetlands and believe that increasing bore use combined with reduced rainfall is very damaging to the local environment - this is the 2nd year in a row where both Bibra Lake and North Lake are dry. This is very deleterious and has exacerbated the infestation of weeds across the dry lake area. Many other parts of the metropolitan area are similarly affected. More education or regulation is needed to help people correlate where the groundwater comes from that it is recharged by rainfall, that it is not an endless supply and that overuse has negative environmental effects.
- We note the point that sprinkler restrictions have been less successful last year in saving water - from general observation many people disregard the bans. It is easy to do via watering at night or for longer periods. The users water bill is the real guide to whether they are observing the restrictions, perhaps more needs to be done in policing the ban. Also many people handwater daily particularly people with more free time such as retirees or seniors, it is very common to see handwatering of grass during summer.
- We agree that the sewerage charges should be reflective of water usage and again increase substantially for high discretionary water use.
- There may be scope for encouraging significant water recycling for use on gardens via the use of water recycling units for domestic use. We found no mention of these in the report. These would be more effective than rain water tanks as they are used all year, whereas small domestic rainwater tanks fill in the season when the least water is required. It should be considered whether these would be a cost effective rebatable option as these would have a real reduction of total water use compared with the current rebates for bores which reduce scheme water use but significantly encourage overuse of ground water. A reduction in the sewerage rates would also flow on for the lower water usage if the two are linked.

We thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the very important issue for the future.

Yours sincerely,

B & T Bocking