



Media Statement

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Western Australia continues to rely on groundwater

Western Australia continues to use groundwater as its largest source of water, according to a new report by the Economic Regulation Authority (ERA).

The ERA's 2015-16 Water, Sewerage and Irrigation Performance report found almost half of the water used in the State is sourced from groundwater.

The report found water drawn from WA's dams, rivers and irrigation channels has fallen by 75 per cent in the past six years.

In 2015-16 there was a 9.3 per cent drop in Perth in the use of water drawn from dams.

Perth's reliance on water sourced from the Binningup and Cockburn Sound desalination plants increased by 13.8 percent, overtaking groundwater for the first time.

"This is the result of the Water Corporation's strategy to source more water from sources independent of climate, such as marine desalination," ERA chair Nicky Cusworth said.

Ms Cusworth said the ERA's report gave an interesting snapshot of how Perth and regional WA was developing.

"The long-term upward trend in Perth's water supply is being driven by population growth and the consequential residential property development," she said.

"On average in the regions, water supplied to residential properties continued its long-term downward trend."

Ms Cusworth said the report found regional towns were taking on water saving measures with average annual residential consumption at its lowest levels in six years.

The average regional household used 7.2 per cent less water in 2015-16, the average Perth household used 1.6 per cent less.

Property development increased the number of connections to water and sewer mains across the State.

"The report found that the total length of sewer mains and channels in Perth and in regional towns increased in the year," Ms Cusworth said.

"This mirrors the growth in water mains, which were both driven by land development."

Industry/Agriculture

Industry, local government and agriculture continue to be the largest users of recycled water in the State, with volumes supplied increasing by 8.8 per cent in the year.

Harvey Water, which supplies irrigation water to growers and dairy farmers in the South West, increased its volumes marginally by two percent.

The volume of water irrigation supplied by Ord Irrigation Cooperative to growers in the State's far north decreased in the year, by 8.8 per cent.

The report and supporting infographics are available on the ERA [website](#).

ENDS

Background

- Groundwater is the potable and non-potable water drawn from aquifers and other below-ground water sources.
- Desalination is potable and non-potable water sourced from marine desalination plants.
- The Water Corporation supplies all except two of the eight water supply schemes in the State. Aqwest-Bunbury Water Corporation supplies the City of Bunbury and Busselton Water Corporation supplies the City of Busselton.

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