



MEDIA RELEASE

Katherine Region Residents Urged to Install Bore Meters

Residents in the Katherine region are being urged to sign up for the NT Government's Bore Metering Project.

The Project's aim is to fit 300 meters to bores in the Darwin rural and Daly regions to gather information about water use, and not as a forerunner to imposing water charges.

Katherine region landholder Sharon Hillen is one of more than 150 people to have already signed as a Project volunteer, saying she wants to install the free bore meters on her 20 acre block to determine how much water she uses.

Ms Hillen said her block is a mixture of garden and domestic stock, such as horses and cattle.

"I understand this project is not about Territorians having to pay for water but rather, Territorians helping the Government measure how much water is being used," Ms Hillen said.

"After all, if you can't measure it, you can't manage it.

"I think people underestimate the water demands placed on the Katherine region and I'd certainly like to know how much water I use before I can determine by how much I should reduce my consumption.

"Katherine residents are not fenced in and independent of one another because we all rely upon the same land and water systems and should therefore sign up as a Project volunteer."

Ms Hillen said many Katherine region residents had relatives who live down south who are currently living with tight water restrictions.

"I think all Katherine residents should do what we can to avoid following the same path as our interstate counterparts," Ms Hillen said.

"After all, when the Government needs to make a decision in future about water allocation they will need as much information as possible to make an informed decision.

"Knowledge is power because it gives people the opportunity to participate in any future decision making."

Department of Natural Resources, Environment and the Arts (NRETA) Water Management Branch director Ian Lancaster said that while the reaction to the Project had been generally well received, more volunteers were required in the Katherine region.

"The Katherine Region is the current focus of a water allocation Planning process," Mr Lancaster said.

“We need to know how much water is being used by people on rural blocks and pastoral properties who have a requirement for stock and domestic water use to ensure that sufficient water is allocated for that purpose.

“I can assure Katherine region residents there is no hidden agenda and that we are simply seeking information to provide us with a more accurate estimation of bore water use in this area so that in turn, better planning will ensure we have water for our future.”

To find out more about participating in the survey or receiving a free bore meter go to www.nt.gov.au/boremeter or contact the NRETA Water Management Branch on 8999 4611 or by emailing water.nreta@nt.gov.au

Ends

Media Note – For more information contact Ian Lancaster on 8999 4892

Issued: 9am Wednesday, 2 May 2007