

# Alice Springs Water Resource Strategy 2005

## Water Efficiency – what do you think?

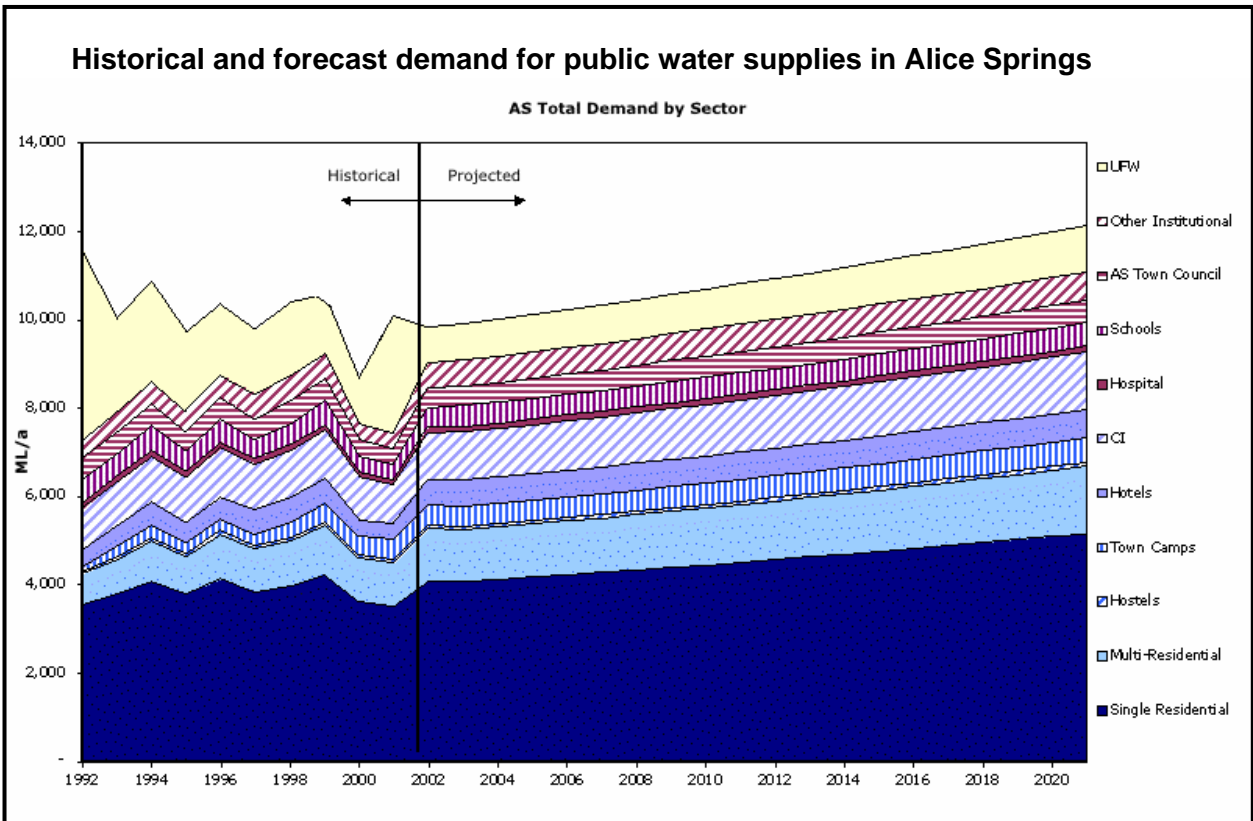
*This issues sheet discusses water efficiency and links to the submission form to allow you to have a say on the planning mechanisms that affect it.*

### What is water efficiency?

Also known as ‘demand management,’ water efficiency is about consuming less water to achieve the same outcome or amenity. For example it is possible to have an attractive garden, flush a toilet and wash your car by using *less* water for an equally acceptable result. Every litre of water ‘saved’ through improved water efficiency is equal to a litre of water supplied which would otherwise be removed from our supply aquifers.

### Population growth and demand for water

Models of population growth and water consumption suggest that demand for public water supplies is likely to rise from its current rate of approximately 10,000 million litres annually to around 12,000 million litres by 2021.



## How should we manage demand in Alice Springs?

In 2002 the Institute for Sustainable Futures (ISF) were contracted to undertake a water efficiency study with the aim of identifying the best water efficiency options for Alice Springs. ISF conducted detailed research into the patterns of water consumption in Alice Springs and recommended water efficiency actions based on the principle of maximising savings for the least cost (least cost planning). Further research into economic costs and benefits is currently being undertaken by ISF.

### Potential costs and benefits from reducing demand for water:

#### Benefits:

- Delay the need to construct new bores
- Reduce the need to enlarge water supply pipes because of future population growth
- Reduce the volume of effluent flow to the waste treatment plant
- Increase the productive life of Alice Springs principal water supply (Amadeus rock aquifers)
- Reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions

#### Costs:

- Possible impacts on lifestyle preferences (e.g. smaller lawns)
- Possible introduction of water restrictions or increase in the price of water for customers
- Reduced annual profitability for Power and Water Corporation (publicly owned company)
- Expenditure on demand management initiatives (two alternative options for demand management programs have been costed at \$3.8 million and \$10.2 million respectively)

### Water efficiency options

The following are examples of options that could be implemented in a water efficiency program:

- Provide residents with free water saving fittings (indoor retrofit)
- Visit homes to provide advice and equipment to improve water efficiency in the garden
- Provide rebates on specific water saving appliances and equipment (e.g. pool covers)
- Community education campaign
- Provide water audits to commercial and industrial water users
- Targeted assistance to high water consumers
- Building controls on new developments
- Water restrictions
- Introducing a pricing system with two or more levels, where the customer pays more for high use
- Leakage control



## **Community Involvement in water efficiency**

Power and Water Corporation have recently invested heavily in leakage control and have achieved a level of leakage that is of International best practice. However, water efficiency also requires the broader Alice Springs community to embrace change.

A successful water efficiency program in Alice Springs will require community support and education to provide motivation and capacity to adopt and sustain changes in the way water is used.

## **The Alice Springs Water Resource Strategy has mechanisms that can promote water efficiency**

The Alice Springs Water Resource Strategy involves the community in decision making about how water resources can be used (Beneficial Uses) and the volume of water allocated for each particular use for the next ten years. Entitlements to use water are provided through Water Extraction Licences which have conditions that regulate the volume of water that can be consumed and how it is managed.

The volumes entitled though Water Licences and licence conditions have the potential to drive water efficiency. For example, if a water user is exceeding their entitlement under their Water Licence or is wasteful, the Controller of Water Resources can cease the water entitlement or legally request steps to improve efficiency.

## **Have your say about Water Efficiency**

Click here to link to [questions](#) in the Alice Springs Water Resources Strategy submission form that relate to mechanisms that affect water efficiency, or download the submission form from [www.alicewaterplan.nt.gov.au](http://www.alicewaterplan.nt.gov.au) , or contact

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