Smart Water Fund

News

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Above: Round 3 funding recipients with the Minister for Water, John Thwaites, at Rossdale Golf Club

Thwaites announces Round 3 funding

The Smart Water Fund has reached another important milestone with the announcement by the Minister for Water, John Thwaites, of 35 Round 3 funding recipients.

Up to $5 million has been made available to a diverse range of projects across three funding streams within the geographic areas of greater metropolitan Melbourne and for the first time, regional urban Victoria.

This will be complemented by an additional $1 million which will be administered by the Smart Water Fund on behalf of the Victorian Water Trust.

Minister Thwaites announced the projects while touring Victoria's first underground aquifer demonstration at Rossdale Golf Club in Aspendale. The project is a collaborative partnership with the golf club, and Sinclair Knight Merz, spearheaded by the CSIRO Land and Water division, a successful Round 2 funding recipient.

Commenting on the tour, Minister Thwaites said, "This is just the sort of innovative project that the Bracks Government is seeking to support through the Smart Water Fund."

The Smart Water Fund provides funding for innovative water conservation projects to individuals, community groups, businesses and research bodies in metropolitan and regional urban Victoria.

"The Smart Water Fund is committed to securing Victoria's water supplies, not just for now but for future generations – the fund is an important tool for encouraging innovation in water recycling, water conservation and bio-solid management'" said, Dennis Cavagna, Smart Water Fund spokesperson.

Since its inception in 2002, the Smart Water Fund has provided more than $13 million in grants to over 75 projects.

"One of the key objectives of the fund is to share the learnings from funded projects to help facilitate greater widespread adoption of these innovations. To do this, we are building a Knowledge Bank to provide the water industry, businesses and the Victorian community with a resource to access the knowledge gained through the Smart Water Fund projects," commented Mr Cavagna.

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City West Water
Melbourne Water
South East Water
Yarra Valley Water
Department of Sustainability and Environment

Our Water Our Future

Successful Round 3 Smart Water Fund Recipients

Funding Recipient	Project Description
Smart Water Fund Regional Open Projects	
Karkana Support Services Inc	Replacement of manual flood irrigation, in a market garden, with a fully automatic drip watering system that is significantly more water efficient and enhances crop yields.
Deakin University	Collection and analysis of water consumption within an eco house in Geelong that is aiming to reduce consumption by 80 per cent.
Barwon Health (trading as Linencare)	Trial of innovative water and energy efficient laundry equipment in a health care facility.
KR Castlemaine Foods Pty Ltd	Demonstration and trial of an innovative water recycling process for a hair removal system in an abattoir.
Carter Holt Harvey Wood Products Australia Pty Ltd	Demonstration and trial of recycling boiler water at the Myrtleford Sawmill.
Department of Primary Industries - Marine & Freshwater Systems	Research into the treatment and reuse of wastewater to grow fish for pet food and other third party users.
GHD Pty Ltd	Demonstration and trial of alternative composting toilet technology to separate sources of human waste and improve recycling opportunities.
Strathfieldsaye Primary School	Development and implementation of a water conservation management model at four local Bendigo schools (Strathfieldsaye PS, Kangaroo Flat PS, Eppalock PS and Mandurang Sth PS).
Phillip Island Nature Park Board of Management Inc	Demonstration of rainwater harvesting for toilet flushing at a major tourist resort (Penguin Parade).
Mildura Rural City Council	Collect, store and monitor stormwater from adjacent wetlands for re-use as a dust suppressant at Council's landfill.
RMIT	Research and trial the use of biosolids, in various forms, as an effective fertilizer in a Canola Cropping System to develop alternative energy sources – putting biosolids to effective use.
Smart Water Fund Metropolitan Open Projects	
Victoria University	Research into improving the aesthetic quality of wastewater through an innovative process that removes colour and trace organics from treated wastewater.
Melbourne City Council	Development of a water conservation reference guide for hotels, including water audits to help them identify ways to save water.
Victoria University	Research into opportunities to use Designer Reclaimed Water (DRW).
Suburban Water Pty Ltd	Development of an urban stormwater harvesting and delivery system.
Monash University	Research into three stormwater recycling systems to quantify the risks and benefits of stormwater recycling.
Senviro Pty Ltd	Develop and trial a cost effective soil moisture sensor for domestic and commercial watering systems.
Jandaro Pty Ltd	Research into the remediation of an existing sand quarry for stormwater capture and storage for irrigation reuse.
Knox City Council	Develop and trial an innovative pool backwash recycling system for reuse at Knox Leisure Works.
Bannink Nursery Pty Ltd	Research and trial the use of treated wastewater for plant production.
Dandenong Ranges Music Council	Develop and distribute "Water Cycle" Songs and a CD Education Package.
Centre for Education and Research in Environmental Strategies (CERES)	Create a visual demonstration of rain and stormwater reuse at a popular educational facility.
RMIT	Research into mitigating the formation of toxic algae from the Western Treatment Plant using innovative salt reduction membranes.
EME Group	Educational awareness program focusing on water sensitive urban design including Council education, home water monitoring and Public Open Days.
Smart Water Fund Targeted Research and Development Projects	
CSIRO and The Institute of Sustainable Futures, University of Technology, Sydney	End use measurement analysis of water consumption within households.
The University of Melbourne	Benefits assessment of household watering technologies.
ACIL Tasman Pty Ltd	Evaluation of effective pricing strategies and models for water conservation in the non-residential sector.
RMIT – Centre for Design	Establishment of guidelines for the use of alternative water resources in new non-residential developments.
CSIRO	Research into household sources of contamination in domestic sewage.
Deakin University	Research into alternative industrial cleaning practices to reduce sewage loadings.
The Institute of Sustainable Futures, University of Technology, Sydney	Research and development of effective modeling tools to assist in estimating externalities for water.
Victorian Water Trust Research and Development Projects	
Monash University	Research into advancing organisational acceptance of water recycling by identifying impediments.
GHD Pty Ltd	Research and Development of the 'Virtual Water Cycle' for Victoria.
Monash University	Research to enhance existing knowledge of potential risks associated with household use of recycled water.
Department of Primary Industries	Research into risks associated with exposure to hormones in recycled water.

City of Boroondara's groovy project creates tough turf

Just one year into a five year study, an innovative water-saving project has met the City of Boroondara Council's early expectations for water conservation and created safer, hardier turf at three of its sports grounds.

The project was made possible by a Smart Water Fund grant and utilised Fytofoam, a revolutionary foam product made from organic chemical materials.

"Put simply, we cut grooves into the sports grounds and inserted Fytofoam into the soil. The foam then absorbs nutrients and moisture from rain and irrigation sprinklers, releasing water slowly back into the soil when needed," said Boroondara Mayor Jack Wegman.

As the foam breaks down into naturally occurring chemical elements, grass roots gradually grow through. This leads to thicker and deeper roots that are able to withstand more wear and tear.

According to Sports grounds Coordinator for the City of Boroondara Parks and Gardens, Nigel Fernando: "The project was relatively simple to install and there is no question that the new system has created a superior surface that is safe and durable."

Sports clubs and athletes are already benefiting from the improved turf, as the risk of on-field injuries has been reduced and event cancellation due to drought or water restrictions has been minimised.

Future water savings will be quantified by a consultant engaged by Council. Current estimates suggest the reduction in water consumption could be by as much as 30 per cent - saving nearly 3.8 megalitres of water per year per sportsground.

Additional benefits include reduced irrigation costs, with further cost-savings expected as roots continue to thicken and grow in the coming years.

"This project is having a major impact on water conservation in our community. We hope it will encourage others to undertake water saving measures, " says Mayor Wegman.

Case Study information and Project reports are available online from the Smart Water Fund website at www.smartwater.com.au

A machine inserts Fytofoam, a foam product made from organic chemical materials, into the root zone of the grass

Vegetable growers get a boost from VUT

Victorian vegetable growers will be able to reduce the amount of water needed to wash and cool vegetables by 99 per cent using a new hydrocooler created by the Victoria University of Technology and the Christou Group.

"The system is portable and recycles water on-site. This means growers can locate the hydrocooler as close to the crops as possible so that produce can be washed and cooled immediately," says Victoria University of Technology project manager, Professor Graham Thorpe.

As a result, growers will need less water to provide consumers with fresher fruits and vegetables that are free of harmful pathogens. It is anticipated that this will improve the domestic market and optimise the export potential for Victorian grown produce.

The water, cost and energy savings are significant.

The new hydrocooler uses approximately 50 litres of water for every tonne of vegetables. This water saving is equivalent to 1000 average-sized swimming pools in comparison to current washing units, which use approximately 10 kilolitres of fresh potable water to wash and cool the same amount of produce.

"In financial terms, this translates to a cost saving of up to $37,500 a year in water bills for metropolitan growers and up to $500,000 a year for regional growers," explains Professor Thorpe.

The hydrocooler will also save 10 kilowatts of electricity per tonne of produce cooled, creating additional benefits for growers and the environment.

"It's a highly sustainable solution to a critical process in the vegetable and fruit growing industry," says Professor Thorpe.

Case Study information is available online from the Smart Water Fund website at www.smartwater.com.au

Tap into a wealth of information with the Smart Water Fund

The Smart Water Fund has supported over 75 projects. All of them provide unique learnings on innovative water conservation, recycling and biosolid management solutions.

Log on to our website to find information on a wide range of innovative sustainable water use projects and download our project documents and case studies.

Visit our website
www.smartwater.com.au

Download our case studies for

- Sporting Facilities
- Waste Water Treatment
- Building and Renovating
- Educational Programs
- Food and Beverage Manufacturing

Do you now someone who would benefit from receiving the Smart Water Fund Newsletter? We encourage all our readers to share the learnings.

Contact
1800 882 432 or

email
info@smartwater.com.au

New resource for culturally sensitive water education

The Western Young People's Independent Network (WYPIN) has released a valuable educational resource to assist water businesses to engage Victoria's culturally and linguistically diverse community about water conservation.

Thao Pham, WYPIN spokesperson, said "newly arrived migrants and refugees face many barriers in understanding their new country, including language and cultural differences.

"It is essential that water education is tailored for this group to ensure the entire community is aware of the importance of water conservation."

The *Refugee and Migrant Youth Water Conservation Capacity Building Project Learnings Report 2005* offers an insight into the perceptions of water use from newly arrived migrants and refugees and provides ideas on how best to educate them on water conservation.

The report recommends promoting simple actions to save water that are affordable and targeted to indoor use.

A general water awareness campaign is also recommended to develop an understanding of the scarcity of water in Australia. The program would introduce new arrivals to their local water company and explain the impact they have on these resources.

The WYPIN report suggests that the best method for this is to train youth ambassadors to deliver these messages to the community.

The report is the result of a two year project by WYPIN, supported by the Department of Sustainability and Environment, City West Water and the Smart Water Fund.

"We're encouraging all water authorities to consider this report when engaging with this community on a day to day basis as well as when planning their education programs on water conservation", said Anne Barker Managing Director, City West Water.

The project was successful in raising the awareness of water conservation within the community and received praise from participants, City West Water and local and state government.

The full report is available online from the Smart Water Fund website at www.smartwater.com.au

Securing Our Water Future Together

This newsletter has been produced using recycled paper and environmentally friendly print techniques.