

Waterwise gardening

It is important that you use recycled water wisely in your garden, as it is still a limited and precious resource. Create your garden following the seven waterwise principles below.

- ✓ Design a waterwise garden
- ✓ Understand your soil
- ✓ Choose waterwise plants
- ✓ Minimise lawn areas
- ✓ Use efficient irrigation systems
- ✓ Always mulch
- ✓ Regularly maintain the garden

Regardless of which water is used, good gardeners consider the local conditions, soil type, climate and position when creating and maintaining their gardens.

For more information about waterwise gardening pick up a free copy of *Smart Gardens for a Dry Climate*, available from Coliban Water and City of Greater Bendigo.

Waterwise gardening also helps reduce urban salinity, which is an issue in some areas of Bendigo. Urban salinity can occur when gardens are over watered resulting in excess water reaching the groundwater table, as the water table rises it brings salt stored in rocks, to the surface. High concentrations of salt can kill plants and damage infrastructure.

Choosing waterwise plants

Jackass Flat is set in a beautiful natural environment that adjoins the Bendigo Regional Park. Creating gardens and choosing plants that complement adjoining bushland areas is strongly encouraged as it helps strengthen and protect our natural environment. Choosing local native plants is a key aspect to this approach to gardening. For more information about local native plants pick up a free copy of *Indigenous Plants of Bendigo – A gardener's guide to Growing and Protecting Local Plants* available from the City of Greater Bendigo.

Information correct at time of printing, November 2010.



RECYCLED WATER
FACT SHEET 4

Gardening with recycled water

URBAN RESIDENTIAL





Gardening with recycled water

Coliban Water provides recycled water treated to Class A standards for domestic use. This means it is produced according to strict guidelines developed by EPA Victoria and the Department of Health. It comes from wastewater and treated to a high quality.

Recycled water is not suitable for personal use, such as drinking or bathing; however, it is safe for watering plants and vegetables. As always, vegetables should be washed with drinking water before being eaten.

Using recycled water for garden use is not much different to using drinking water, with some extra nutrients and salt to consider. Owing to the extra nutrients, it is likely that you will need less or no fertiliser. It is always important to take care and not over fertilise or over water.

Many golf courses and nurseries have successfully irrigated with recycled water for decades.

For more information on recycled water, visit our website at www.coliban.com.au or contact our Customer Contact Centre on 1300 363 200.

Salt of the earth

Salt can accumulate in the soil over time. An accumulation of salt in the soil can increase the energy that a plant uses to get water (known as the osmotic effect). Salt in recycled water can also impact on plants by 'burning' leaves when they are sprayed with the water in the heat of the day.

The salt content of the recycled water that you will receive is slightly higher than that of drinking water. It is very unlikely that you will notice any impact on lawns, gardens or pastures from using the recycled water.



Extra source of nutrients

Although most of the nutrients have been removed as part of the treatment process, the recycled water still contains small amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus. Most plants will thrive on this extra source of nutrients. It is expected that you will only need to add extra fertiliser to high growth plants such as vegetables. Some native seedlings may be sensitive to the phosphorus levels, in particular grevilleas, hakeas, proteas and banksias.

These nutrients can be great for the garden but not for the stormwater system as they can upset waterways. Avoid letting recycled water run off into the stormwater drain by watering appropriately.

