

Planning our water future

Central Coast Council is planning for our future now to ensure our region has a sustainable and resilient water system that can adapt and respond to change. We need to consider new sources of water (supply) and find new ways to reduce the water we all use (demand). This series of information sheets provide an overview of the potential water supply and demand option types we are discussing with our community as we plan our water future together.



Demand option: Conservation of water

What is it and how does it work?

Water conservation programs aim to reduce the demand on drinking water supplies by:

- Identifying and repairing water leaks
- Using water more efficiently

What is currently in place on the Central Coast?

Council is undertaking a major leak detection survey of the water distribution network to find and reduce leaks. Reducing water pressures in some parts of the distribution network can also decrease the frequency and likelihood of pipe breaks and leaks.

We promote water conservation behaviours through the [Love Water](#) program, at schools and early childhood education programs and at public events. This program is currently focused on behavioural changes to promote a more efficient use of water.

We also work with large industrial and commercial customers to reduce their water consumption.

Things we need to consider

Water conservation programs rely on water efficient behaviours and the adoption of water efficient appliances across the population.

There can be a cost burden for some households and businesses to purchase and install water efficient appliances or equipment. However, external regulation ensures that new development and building renovations make use of more water efficient devices compared to homes built before the early 2000s.

The effectiveness of water conservation programs can be difficult to measure because demand for water is heavily influenced by weather which can often mask changes in consumption.

Conserving water provides environmental benefits as less water is ultimately extracted from the environment due to reduced demand.

How we're considering this option for the Central Coast Water Security Plan

Council will prepare a formal water conservation program based on an Efficient Level of Water Conservation (ELWC) model. This will guide future investments where they will provide the most benefits as we work within the emerging NSW State Wide Water Efficiency program.

We are monitoring the outcomes of the current network leak detection survey to confirm the potential to further reduce leakages. This could be done through a range of programs including the reduction of water pressure and by increasing water main renewals which reduce leakage.

Council is also maintaining its [Love Water](#) education campaign beyond the end of the recent drought and is working with neighbouring water utilities to understand the tools they are using to reinforce water efficient behaviours among their customers.

See key results table for further detail about how this option is being considered in the plan.

Key results

The table below provides further detail about how this option is being considered in the plan.

	Category	Additional information
Potential additional water available	Low	More efficient use of water can delay but not replace the need for future investments to increase supply. The Central Coast Community is already relatively water efficient.
Reliability and resilience	Low	Reduces demand for water which improves the resilience of the system. Relies on the community adopting water-wise behaviours.

	Impact	Additional information
Indicative cost to build	Low	Smaller scale initiatives with lower costs compared to other large-scale supply options.
Indicative cost to operate	Low	Smaller scale initiatives with lower costs compared to other large-scale supply options.

	Impact	Additional information
Environmental impacts	Low	Less water extracted from the environment.
Cultural and social impacts	Low	Additional costs for investments in water efficient appliances.
Timeframe for delivery	Low	Programs can be implemented immediately but broad behaviour change can take years to achieve.

Some information contained in this fact sheet was sourced from Hunter Water Corporation