



# INNER WEST COUNCIL

## Rainwater Tank Rebate Program



### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### **Who is eligible for the rebate?**

Private landowners (rate payers), residents and businesses in the Inner West Council local government area are eligible to apply for a rebate for tanks purchased and installed after 1 July 2016, or from 2008 for residents in the former Marrickville Council area.

#### **Am I eligible for the rainwater tank rebate if I am a tenant?**

Yes. You will need to get permission from your landlord to install the tank.

#### **I live in a multi-unit dwelling (flat/apartment/unit). Can I install a tank?**

Yes. An additional flat rate of \$500 is paid for tanks installed on common property that forms part of a strata plan of rateable properties. This is on top of the current rebate. You will need to get permission from the Owners Corporation (Body Corporate). Different rules apply depending on whether the tank is located on common land or land within a lot of a strata scheme.

Contact Council planning advisory officers for advice on 9392 5000.

#### **I am the holder of a Pensioner Concession or Commonwealth Health Care Card; how could I afford a tank?**

Council may pay you an extra 50% rebate if you have a Pensioner Concession or Commonwealth Health Care card.

#### **Are schools eligible for the rainwater tank rebate?**

No, schools are not eligible for this rebate.

#### **Do I need to lodge a Development Application with Council to install a rainwater tank?**

In most cases, rainwater tanks can be installed without the need for a Development Application. To check if you will need an application, refer to the *Exempt Development* checklist.

#### **I am building a new house or doing major renovations and I want to install a tank. Am I eligible for the rebate?**

If you are required to install a tank as a condition of development consent or for meeting your BASIX commitments, you will not be eligible for the rebate.

#### **How can I work out the size and type of tank I need?**

The size you choose will vary greatly depending on your roof area and the amount of water you require. To help make this decision, Council holds regular Rainwater Harvesting Workshops. These workshops help people accurately assess their needs and applicants must attend a workshop to receive the rebate. Council provides a *Household Water Audit* worksheet to more accurately estimate your water demands. Discuss your water requirements with your chosen installer. All plumbers must be licensed to install internally connected water tanks.



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## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS (CONTINUED)

### **I already have a tank installed, do I need to do the Rainwater Harvesting Workshop?**

Yes. The workshop covers the essential components of rainwater harvesting systems and how to maintain them. The workshop is compulsory for all rainwater tank rebate applicants.

### **Can I install an underground tank?**

Yes, however you will need to submit a Development Application.

### **How much rainwater can be collected?**

Every square metre of roof collects 1 litre of water for every 1 millimetre of rainfall received. Therefore, a tank connected to 50% of the roof area of a 200 m<sup>2</sup> roof would collect 1000 litres after 10 millimetres of rain. This is more water than the average Sydney family uses in one day for all purposes.

### **Is rainwater safe to drink and use for cooking?**

NSW Health does not recommend rainwater for drinking, cooking or for personal contact such as showering or swimming in areas where a public water supply is available. This is because the public water supply is filtered, disinfected and generally fluoridated. However, some filters can purify water to drinking a quality standard. If you have any concerns, visit the NSW Health website at [www.health.nsw.gov.au](http://www.health.nsw.gov.au) to obtain a fact sheet.

### **Can I connect my tank to the toilet, laundry or hot water system?**

Council strongly encourages internal plumbing and this will substantially increase your rebate. Internal plumbing must be done by a [licensed plumber](#) according to the *Plumbing Code of Australia*, and include the installation of an appropriate backflow prevention device.

### **Will I need to buy a pump?**

Depending on the location of your tank and whether it is plumbed internally, you may have to install a pump. The size and type of pump you select is something you should discuss with your chosen supplier. Pumps can be noisy so they **must** be housed in a soundproof enclosure.

### **What other compulsory accessories will I need?**

- First flush diverter
- Mosquito proofing of all openings to prevent breeding;
- Backflow prevention devices when your tank is plumbed internally;
- Backup system to mains water for internally plumbed tanks, so you do not run out of water; and
- Signs for all outlets of the rainwater tank stating that it is rainwater.

### **What is a first flush diverter?**

A first flush diverter prevents the initial 10 to 20 litres of water from flowing into the tank, as this water is more likely to be contaminated with leaves and debris from the roof. A first flush diverter is essential to maintain a high standard of water quality from your rainwater tank.

### **When does the Program end?**

Currently, there is no end date to the rebate program. However, the annual funding available to provide rebates is capped. The Inner West Council can stop the Program with 21 days' notice. Notification of the Program's suspension will be through Council's website and local newspapers.