



**RAINWATER HARVESTING  
ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA**

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## **Seqwater debt is not a result of low water consumption**

The \$9.9 billion Seqwater debt<sup>1</sup> is not a result of low water consumption by residents. The debt reflects a series of choices about providing water, including a desalination plant, a recycling plant and a water grid for SEQ.

Better options exist. Independent research by the RHA showed that alternative options including rainwater harvesting and water efficient appliances could provide a mix of mains and alternative water solutions that would save the community \$3.5B by 2050<sup>2</sup>.

Our current water services are expensive to operate and selling more water will drive more debt. In the past the government was facing a serious drought crisis. We are not in that situation now. We have the time to consider a range of options.

NSW is clearly delivering a more efficient water service with lower charges and lower operating costs<sup>3</sup>. Has NSW used water saving targets encouraging rainwater harvesting on all new buildings for the last 10 years? Yes.

***"Back in 2012 we calculated that each house with a 5 kL rainwater tank used to supply laundry, toilet and outdoor uses should reduce the net present costs of operating water authorities by at least \$1,442 for each household with a rainwater tank<sup>5</sup>." Toby Peacock***

The Seqwater debt crisis is a good prompt to go back and consider different water options.

**Rainwater Harvesting Association of Australia – contact Toby Peacock 0419 685 388**

Ends

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<sup>1</sup> SEQWater Annual Report 2015/16

<sup>2</sup> Coombes P.J., Smit M., and MacDonald G., (2016), Resolving boundary conditions in economic analysis of distributed solutions for water cycle management. Australian Journal of Water Resources, Vol 20, 11-29.

<sup>3</sup> Australian Bureau of Statistics 4610.0 - Water Account, Australia, 2014-15

<sup>4</sup> Bureau of Meteorology (2017), National performance report 2015–16:urban water utilities

<sup>5</sup> Peter Coombes (2012) Effectiveness of rainwater harvesting for management of the urban water cycle in South East Queensland, Urban Water Cycle Solutions

## **Company profile – Rainwater Harvesting Association of Australia**

The RHAA is a not for profit rainwater harvesting industry association that works to:

- support sustainable water use in Australia;
- support the 5.1 million Australians who own a rainwater tank (ABS, 2013);
- promote rainwater harvesting as an integral part of sustainable water management;
- maintain standards and guidelines for rainwater harvesting in Australia.

These actions grow and develop the \$500 million Australian rainwater harvesting industry.

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