



Sustainable Events: Water Efficiency





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Water is one of our most precious resources. South Australians live in the driest state on the driest inhabited continent, so we need to ensure that our water resources are used wisely. Water is used in many different ways at events, for example, irrigation, drinking water and sanitation. Event organisers, staff, vendors and attendees should use water as sustainably and efficiently as possible. When planning events, think about where water is sourced from and what will end up as waste water.

With longer and hotter heatwaves occurring, it is important that free drinking water is available to everyone at events.

The City of Adelaide provides connection to a potable water supply for most events, to be used for drinking, food preparation, washing up and irrigation. The Adelaide Park Lands are irrigated with recycled water and these connections are typically turned off prior to events, to prevent accidental use or cross-contamination.

Recycled water may be available for non-drinking activities, such as pre-event irrigation and dust suppression.



Success story

WOMADelaide attracted around 80,000 people into Botanic Park on four warm summer days in March 2019. Free water refill stations were advertised in the lead up to the event, and attendees were encouraged to BYO bottles. All water stations were centrally located. Additionally, misting equipment was used in above 30-degree temperatures. These actions greatly reduced the number of single-use plastic water bottles in circulation, while keeping attendees cool and hydrated.

This checklist can be used as a guide to achieving a water efficient event. Simply select actions that are applicable to your event and ensure regular reviews for continued improvement.



Sustainable Event Water Checklist

Before the event

- Consider the likely temperature range for event scheduling and plan accordingly taking water availability and requirements into account.
- Choose a venue with water efficient measures or designs in place, or that utilise recycled water to reduce potable water consumption (i.e. does the venue have rainwater tanks, rain gardens or use the [Glenelg to Adelaide Park Lands Recycled Water Scheme](#)).
- Choose a venue with drinking fountains, consider installing them, or hire temporary water stations.
- Look for government or industry rebates, such as the [City of Adelaide Sustainability Incentive Scheme](#), to install water saving devices or solar hot water.
- Choose a venue with water efficient equipment and appliances, or, install or hire them, i.e.
 - Water appliances/equipment rated to the Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards ([WELS](#)) of 4 stars or higher
 - Dual flush toilets
 - Low flow taps/showers
 - Timed taps or taps that turn off automatically.
- Choose a venue or a meeting space with a National Australian Built Environment Rating System ([NABERS](#)) or [Green Star](#) rating of 4.5 stars or higher.
- Conduct an audit of the site and ensure any leaks are fixed before the event.
- Work with organisations who also reduce their water impact and ensure agreements include capturing and reporting data on water source, consumption and real-time monitoring.
- When hiring toilets, select a provider who is water efficient, waterless or uses 'grey water' safely, and disposes of wastewater correctly.
- Avoid the use of water for cleaning surfaces that can be cleaned with other appropriate and sustainable methods (i.e. sweeping).
- Prevent pollution of stormwater and watercourses by eliminating runoff, litter and chemical use.
- Provide weather protective surfacing in areas of high pedestrian or vehicle traffic to avoid erosion, mud or water flow issues.
- Educate and encourage all stakeholders to use water wisely and maintain water quality with conscious product use (chemicals) and wastewater disposal.
- Brief staff so that they can answer questions about available facilities and water saving initiatives of the event.
- Consider irrigating surrounding lawns and vegetation at appropriate times before a heatwave for a cooling effect during the heatwave and for comfort at the event.
- Make a public statement of commitment with a clear message to stakeholders about what you stand for and expectations in relation to sustainable water use.
- Promote information on sustainable water use at key customer touch points (i.e. website).
- Ensure water refill stations are located centrally and are clearly labelled, showing their locations on electronic maps.



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During the event

- Educate the community with signage, information booths, staff engagement etc.
- Along with ensuring plenty of shade is available on-site, consider using efficient water misters during high temperatures.
- Ask attendees for feedback about water use.
- Collect data (i.e. the quantity of water used through water stations on site or how many litres of water was recycled) on water usage.
- Provide wastewater containers to vendors and dispose of contents appropriately.
- Monitor water usage and wastewater.

After the event

- Clean up the site to ensure no litter or pollution can be blown or washed into surrounding areas or watercourses.
- Ensure chemicals and oils are disposed of responsibly.
- Conduct an online survey asking, for example, if attendees brought in BYO bottles/cups, if they noticed water saving initiatives at the event, if sustainable water use is important to them etc.
- Promote, celebrate and share stories of sustainable water use with the community, venue and networks, thanking them for their contributions.
- Document opportunities and learnings for the next event and track progress.
- Share stories with the sustainability team at the City of Adelaide: sustainability@cityofadelaide.com.au

More information on our Water Sensitive City can be found on the [City of Adelaide website](#).

Did you know?

Recycling materials conserves water. Processing materials into new products often requires less water than making products from raw materials. For example, producing paper from recycled material needs 99% less water than if produced from raw materials.

(Source: City of Melbourne)



Water Management Tips



Provide drinking fountains to reduce bottled water



Choose water efficient equipment and appliances



Check and repair any leaks to avoid wastage of water



Ensure chemicals and oils are responsibly disposed of and not poured down drains



Hiring toilets?
Choose water efficient, waterless or grey water systems that dispose of wastewater correctly

This checklist was informed by multiple existing resources including those from the Cities of Brisbane and Melbourne. Kind thanks to everyone working in this space.

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cityofadelaide.com.au/sustainable-events