UWS Water initiatives

Water conservation
Water Savings Action Plans (Penrith and Hawkesbury)
The UWS Water Conservation and Management programs ensure compliance with water saving objectives (PDF, 87Kb) and action plans, seeks to minimise water-borne pollution discharge and aims to reduce water consumption. Since the implementation of Water Saving Action Plans water consumption on UWS Kingswood campus has decreased by 24% per EFTSL.

Water audits and Bizfix Program (SWC collaboration)
UWS continues its partnership with Sydney Water to reduce its water consumption where possible and has also taken part in Sydney Water's BizFix program with installations in amenities at UWS Campbelltown, UWS Bankstown and UWS Nirimba to reduce flow rates.

Water recycling and stormwater harvesting
Did you know that UWS has the capacity to recycle 700,000 kilolitres of water per year through the Hawkesbury Water Recycling Scheme. That's equivalent to 350 Olympic sized swimming pools.

Rainwater harvesting
Rainwater harvesting to irrigate gardens and/or to provide toilet flushing is undertaken where appropriate and installations are now at almost all campuses. Major installations of large water tanks are underground at the Werrington Living Laboratory Demonstration Site, embedded in new buildings at Parramatta and above the ground at Hawkesbury and Campbelltown.

Water sensitive urban design
Landscape Masterplans have been developed for all campuses to provide a set of guiding principles encompassing issues such as safety through design, sustainability and water sensitive design and robustness of materials. Water sensitive gardens employ sub-surface irrigation and use carpark and avenue planting to enhance shade and character.

Hawkesbury water reuse scheme
Reuse of treated effluent and harvesting of stormwater are gaining broader recognition as means of conserving a valuable resource, while reducing impacts from pollutants and nutrient loads on our river systems. The Hawkesbury Water Reuse Scheme seeks to showcase an integrated approach to effluent and stormwater reuse and constructed wetland technologies, and provide a focus for community awareness of the potential benefits of water reuse.

The Engaging Communities in Water Management Planning research project is part of the WSROC/WiTL initiative that aims to widen the engagement of the general population to address regional water issues, from the current focus on household water use to the potential impacts of water supply constraints on environmental values, regional amenity and land uses.

June 2010
The Hawkesbury Water Recycling Scheme is an excellent example of the movement towards integrated strategies across all UWS campuses to address issues of water conservation, stormwater and rainwater harvesting, and flood mitigation. Investment in infrastructure in the Scheme has been ongoing since its instigation in the 1960s-1970s, though was largely on an ad hoc basis. During the 1990s, approximately $4 million from Federal, State, local government and industry funds established infrastructure for stormwater harvesting and treatment (ie the Richmond Water Reuse Project). The available capacity of the scheme is currently estimated to include 500,000 kilolitres pa of recycled effluent from Sydney Water Corporation and 200,000 kilolitres pa of recycled stormwater, totalling 700,000 kilolitres pa. The water is available for use for irrigation purposes and is monitored stringently to ensure quality.

**Current water users of the Scheme include:**
- Richmond TAFE,
- Taronga Zoo (koala food plantations),
- Department of Primary Industries (Sydney Vegetable Demonstration Site),
- UWS School of Natural Sciences (grazing and horse unit, horticulture unit, and Hawkesbury Forest Experiment),
- Hawkesbury Skillshare (community garden), and
- Greening Australia (production nursery).

**Scheme Expansion**
A structured series of infrastructure improvements to promote effective transfer to water users, and utilisation for landscaping and gardens has been implemented in 2009 with further expansion for 2010 and 2011. These designs reflect an integration with other strategic imperatives and operational initiatives across UWS, including the UWS Water Saving Action Plan, the UWS Landscape Masterplan, and the Greening UWS initiative.

**Contacts**
The daily operation of the Scheme including monitoring for water quality is undertaken by Capital Works and Facilities. For further information please contact the Senior Manager, Environment and Risk Management.