



Urban Rainwater Tank Policy

Policy Statement

To address all issues regarding the installation of rainwater tanks in urban areas, where town water supply is available. The introduction of BASIX (Building and Sustainability Index) in July 2005 obligated most new developments to install a rainwater tank to achieve a 40% reduction in mains water usage.

Related Legislation, Department of Local Government Circulars or Guideline:

- Local Government Act 1993
- Local Government (General) Regulation 2005
- AS / NZS 3500 National Plumbing and Drainage Code
- NSW Code of Practice – Plumbing and Drainage
- CUPDR Circular 18 Guidelines for Plumbing Associated with Tanks in Urban Areas
- AS / NZS 2845 Backflow Prevention
- Environmental Planning & Assessment Act – SEPP 4
- DIPNR – Building & Sustainability Index (BASIX)
- Department of Health – Circular 2000/1 use of rainwater tanks where a reticulated supply is available.

Does this Document Replace an Existing Policy, Procedure or Plan?

Yes, this document replaces Council's:

- Urban Rainwater Tank Policy 16/6/2005 & 15/12/2005

Related Council Policy or Procedure

- Backflow Prevention Policy
- Water Restrictions Policy
- Coffs Harbour City Council LEP 2000
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Application and Distribution

It is mandatory for all Council officials to comply with this Policy.

This Policy and Guidelines is available on Council's website under Council Policies.

Approved by: Executive Team [Meeting date] Council [Meeting date & Resolution No.] 24/09/2009 Resolution C52	Signature: <hr/> General Manager
Effective: 24/09/2009	Review Date:
Distribution :	Record Number:
Responsible Council Department/Officer: Coffs Harbour Water	
Version History Table:	

Key Responsibilities

<i>Position</i>	<i>Directorate</i>	<i>Responsibility</i>
Mayor	Council	To lead Councillors in their understanding of, and compliance with, this Policy and Guidelines.
General Manager	Executive	To lead staff (either directly or through delegated authority) in their understanding of, and compliance with, this Policy and Guidelines. To approve resources to develop, implement and review this Policy and Guidelines.
Senior Technical Coordinator		Monitor compliance with this policy Monitor information regarding connection details Administer backflow requirements
Directors	All Directorates	To communicate, implement and comply with this Policy and related Guidelines.
Director of Corporate Services	Corporate Business	To ensure (directly or through delegation) the distribution and communication of the Policy and Guidelines to specified persons.
Executive Manager HR & Organisational Development	Corporate Business	Facilitate the provision of regular training to all Council officials on their role and responsibilities in relation to this Policy, Guidelines and related procedures.
Executive and Managers	All Directorates	To implement this Policy, Guidelines and related procedures. To lead staff in their understanding of, and compliance with, this Policy and Guidelines
Information Technology Manager	Corporate Business	To assist with the development of systems to support public access to this Policy, Guidelines and related information.
All Council officials	Council	To comply with this Policy, Guidelines and related procedures.

Urban Rainwater Tank Policy

Policy Guidelines

1. Introduction

To address all issues regarding the installation of rainwater tanks in urban areas, where town water supply is available. The introduction of BASIX (Building and Sustainability Index) in July 2005 obligated most new developments to install a rainwater tank to achieve a 40% reduction in mains water usage.

Policy Statement:

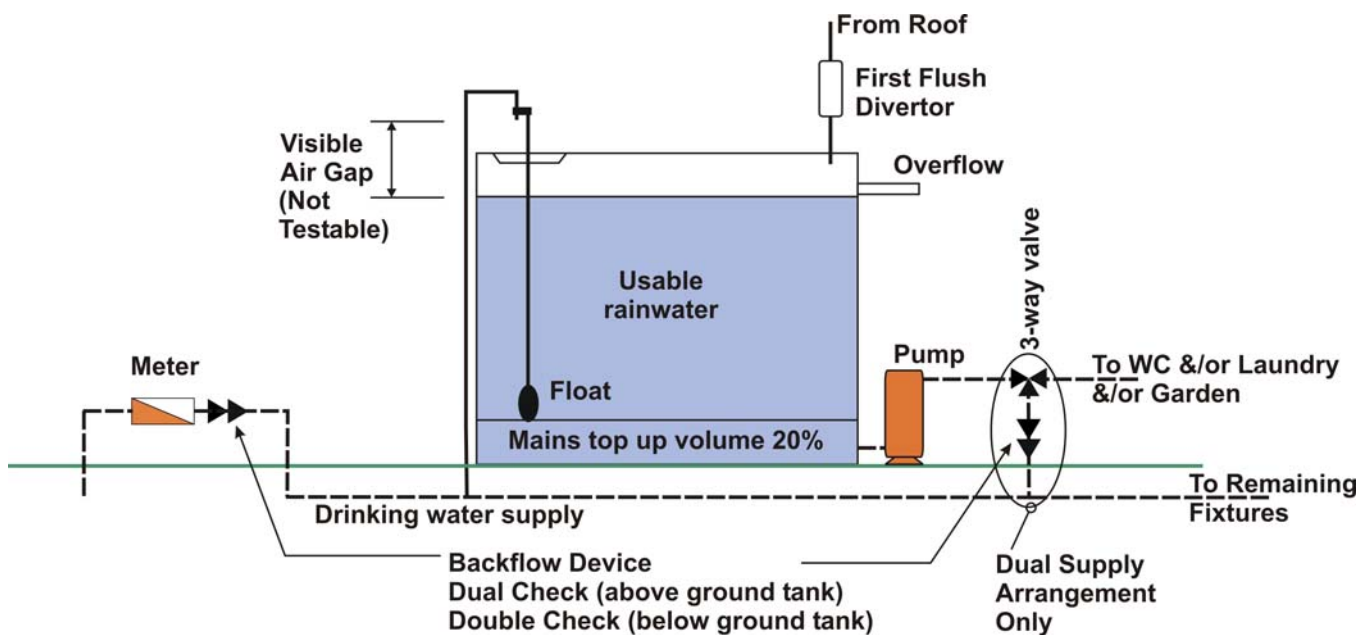
Generally:

1. A Rainwater Tank Installation Application must be submitted to Coffs Harbour Water to ensure compliance with this Policy and to track installations not requiring development consent.
2. All work is to be carried out by a licensed plumber as per *AS / NZS 3500 & NSW Code of Practice Plumbing and Drainage*.
3. Where approval is given by Coffs Harbour Water to top up from the mains supply:
 - The maximum size of the potable water supply line used for topping up shall be 15mm **OR** a flow restrictor must be installed to ensure the filling rate is no more than approx. 2 litres per minute.
 - There must be a visible air gap (external to the rainwater tank) between the inlet pipe from the mains supply and the invert level of the overflow pipe.
 - "Topping up" should not take place until the tank is at least 80% empty (a float valve is required to regulate the "topping up")
 - All rainwater tanks topped up from the mains supply are categorised as a break tank and as such, must be registered with Coffs Harbour Water.
4. All tank outlets must be labelled "RAINWATER" on a metallic sign as specified in *AS1319*
5. All pipes carrying rainwater must be labelled "RAINWATER". This can be done using pipe markers for above ground (made in accordance with *AS1345*).
6. Tank overflow water shall run to an approved Council storm water collection point.
7. First flush water diverters are recommended but not mandatory.
8. Pump and pressure systems must be sized to suit owner's requirements.
9. A backflow prevention device must be installed at the property meter to protect the mains supply. Where a testable device is required, a registration form and initial test certificate is to be forwarded to Coffs Harbour Water for registration, within 1 week of completion of installation and testing. The type of the device required varies in different situations.
10. Tanks and associated installations shall not adversely impact on the amenity of adjoining properties in terms of size, design, style height and location.
11. All tank / tank stand installations to be structurally sound and comply with manufacturers and / or designers specifications.

12. The rainwater tank must not collect water from a source other than gutters or down pipes or a potable water supply top up.
13. The rainwater tank must not be installed over or immediately adjacent to a water or sewer main.
14. The rainwater tank must not be installed over any structure or fitting used by Coffs Harbour Water in the maintenance of any water or sewer main or easements.
15. The rainwater tank must be enclosed and any inlet to the tank must be screened or filtered.
16. The rainwater tank must be maintained at all times, so as not to cause a nuisance with respect to mosquito breeding or overland water flow.
17. Where rainwater tanks are connected to mains supply by way of top up system, the property will be subject to any current level of water restrictions imposed.
18. Proximity to other services:

Above ground rainwater services shall **not** be installed within 100mm of any parallel drinking water supply.

Below ground rainwater services shall **not** be installed within 300mm of any parallel drinking water supply.



Maintenance:

Maintenance of a rainwater tank and the quality of the water supplied from a tank are the responsibility of the owner, not Coffs Harbour Water.

NSW Health does not recommend the use of rainwater tanks for drinking purposes, where reticulated drinking water supply is available.

- The roof, gutters and inlet should be cleaned regularly to ensure a safe water supply is captured in the rainwater tank.
- Leaves and debris should be removed from the gutter quarterly and overhanging branches trimmed and removed where possible.
- The inlet screen should be removed, thoroughly cleaned and replaced quarterly.

Backflow Protection:

1. For above ground rainwater tanks:

- **20 mm and 25mm meters with Potable Water Top up arrangement**
 - Coffs Harbour Water will replace the existing meter free of charge with a new integral dual check valve meter. (if not already fitted). This will be done on receipt of the customer's application form or by calling Council to arrange for the meter exchange.
- **32mm and larger meters with Potable Water Top up arrangement**
 - A minimum of a dual check valve must be installed adjacent to the meter.
- **All meters with Dual supply arrangement**
 - A dual check valve must be installed adjacent to the meter and immediately upstream on the potable supply, at the point of interconnection. An approved 3-way valve is required at the point of interconnection.

2. For below ground rainwater tanks:

A new meter is not required but a testable backflow device (DCV) must be installed at the meter. Where the below ground tank has a dual supply arrangement a testable backflow device (DCV) is also required immediately upstream on the potable supply, at the point of interconnection. An approved 3-way valve is required at the point of interconnection.

3. Testable Backflow Devices:

All costs associated with testable backflow devices are the responsibility of the owner. The device must be registered with Coffs Harbour Water and the owner must arrange for a licensed plumber/tester to test the device once a year.

Testable devices include:

- Double Check Valves (DCV)
- Reduced Pressure Zone Devices (RPZD)
- Registered Air Gaps

4. External Hose Taps:

All external hose taps must be fitted with a hose connection Atmospheric Vacuum Breaker (AVB)

Other Commercial Systems:

Coffs Harbour Water will assess all commercial tank top up and/or integrated systems for suitability, as they become available and they will be added to an approved systems list (IR1428085).

Alternative Water Supplies:

Where an alternative water supply (other than rainwater) is reticulated on a property an RPZD backflow prevention device must be installed at the water meter.

Alternative water supplies include:

- Treated grey water reuse
- Reclaimed wastewater
- Septic treatment/reuse systems

Other Related Policies

Backflow Prevention Policy

Water Restrictions Policy

Coffs Harbour City Council LEP 2000

2. Definitions

Terms used in the Guideline—

RAINWATER -	Non Potable Water collected from roof drainage
RPZD -	Reduced Pressure Zone Device, for backflow prevention (testable device)
DCV -	Double Check Valve, for backflow prevention (testable device)
AVB -	Atmospheric Vacuum Breaker, for backflow prevention

3. Objectives

The objective of Council's Urban Rainwater Tank Policy and Guidelines is to —

- Monitor compliance with this policy
- Monitor information regarding connection details
- Administer backflow requirements

4. Policy Statement

Council's Council's Urban Rainwater Tank Policy and Guidelines is underpinned by the following principles—

4.1 Access

- Public access to information about urban rainwater tank installations will be through Council's website.
- Reasonable access assistance will be available to persons with special needs

4.2 Responsiveness and Accountability

- The policy will be administered through the requirement of installers to complete an installation application. Submission of the application is a mandatory requirement, prior to issue of an Occupation Certificate.

4.3 Privacy and Confidentiality

- The principles of Council's Privacy Management Plan will be applied.

4.4 Integrity, Dignity and Respect

- Council treats all persons with courtesy and respect.
- Council will not tolerate rude or aggressive behaviour towards Council officials. In such circumstances, Council officials are entitled to terminate phone calls or meetings as appropriate. Wherever possible, Council officials will provide the person with initial warning that their conduct is inappropriate and that the meeting or conversation will be terminated.
- Council officials will demonstrate fair and consistent decision-making.