

Water efficiency management plans (WEMPs)—Fact sheet

What is a WEMP?

A WEMP is a water efficiency management plan. It is intended to apply to non-residential water customers ('businesses') that receive water from a water service provider.

A WEMP aims to assist a business to better understanding their water consumption and to describe what measures they intend to implement to improve their efficiency of water use. It may also assist a water service provider to better manage demand in their service area.

Who must prepare a WEMP and how?

A business must prepare a WEMP if it receives a notice from its water service provider under section 52 of the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* (the Act).

If a business is directed to prepare a WEMP it must follow the *Guidelines for preparing a water efficiency management plan*. These describe requirements to include details of:

1. the name, location and nature of the business
2. water sources
3. current and historical water consumption data
4. water savings and efficiencies that will be achieved by implement the WEMP
5. time frames for implementing the WEMP.

There is a WEMP template available on the Business Queensland website that can be used to develop and submit a WEMP.

Who might voluntarily prepare a WEMP and why?

Any business may choose to voluntarily prepare a WEMP to support its business objectives. A WEMP helps customers to:

- identify water as a business input that should be considered as part of business planning
- better manage consumption and reduce water-related costs
- recognise links between water, energy and waste, and to reduce energy and chemical costs
- change employee behaviour and enhance the business's reputation
- review their performance and seek new opportunities for water efficiency

Why might your water service provider require a WEMP?

Your water service provider may be directed by the Chief Executive of the Department of Regional Development, Manufacturing and Water (DRDMW) to give you a written notice to prepare a WEMP. Your water service provider might also direct you to produce a WEMP to meet their own needs.

The WEMP program provides a tool for water service providers to work with their customers in order to achieve long term demand management outcomes. A WEMP helps the water service provider to:

- ensure that water is available for future residential and non-residential demand
- defer or avoid investment to augment water and wastewater infrastructure
- meet demand management targets or requirements that may be set by government
- manage the equity of water efficiency measures taken by customers.

Aims of a WEMP

For commercial buildings, the aim of developing and implementing a WEMP is to:

- find and fix water leaks
- have fixtures and appliances meet target WELs ratings
- ensure infrastructure is operated efficiently with regard to water consumption
- ensure outdoor watering use is efficient.

Guidelines are available on efficient outdoor irrigation on the waterwise gardening section of the Queensland Government website.

For some types of non-residential premises (such as a public swimming pool, nursery, hospital, and power station of manufacturing facility) the aim is to achieve best practice water efficiency or reduce water use by 25 % or implement all efficiency measures with a payback of less than four years.

Administration for a mandatory WEMP

To be approved, a mandatory WEMP must be submitted to the requesting water service provider for approval within the timeframe specified in the notice, and must be consistent with the Guidelines. Penalties apply for non-conformance with a notice.

Once the WEMP is approved, the customer is required to implement the measures identified in the plan. Penalties apply for non-compliance with an approved plan. In addition, a customer is required to provide annual reports to their water service provider on the progress of implementing their WEMP.

Reviewing and changing a mandatory WEMP

A WEMP prepared in response to a notice must be amended or replaced where there has been a change in circumstances to ensure it remains current. Under the Act the customer or the water service provider can initiate an amendment of a WEMP.

A customer must review their WEMP at least every 5 years and provide a review report to their water service provider. The water service provider will notify the customer when a review is required.

Further information

More information is available on the Queensland Government's Business Queensland website, under managing water demand (business.qld.gov.au). If you have further questions, please contact the Urban Water Supply Planning group at UrbanWaterSupply@rdmw.qld.gov.au.