

Operational Report



An employee at a community event

Water connects us all

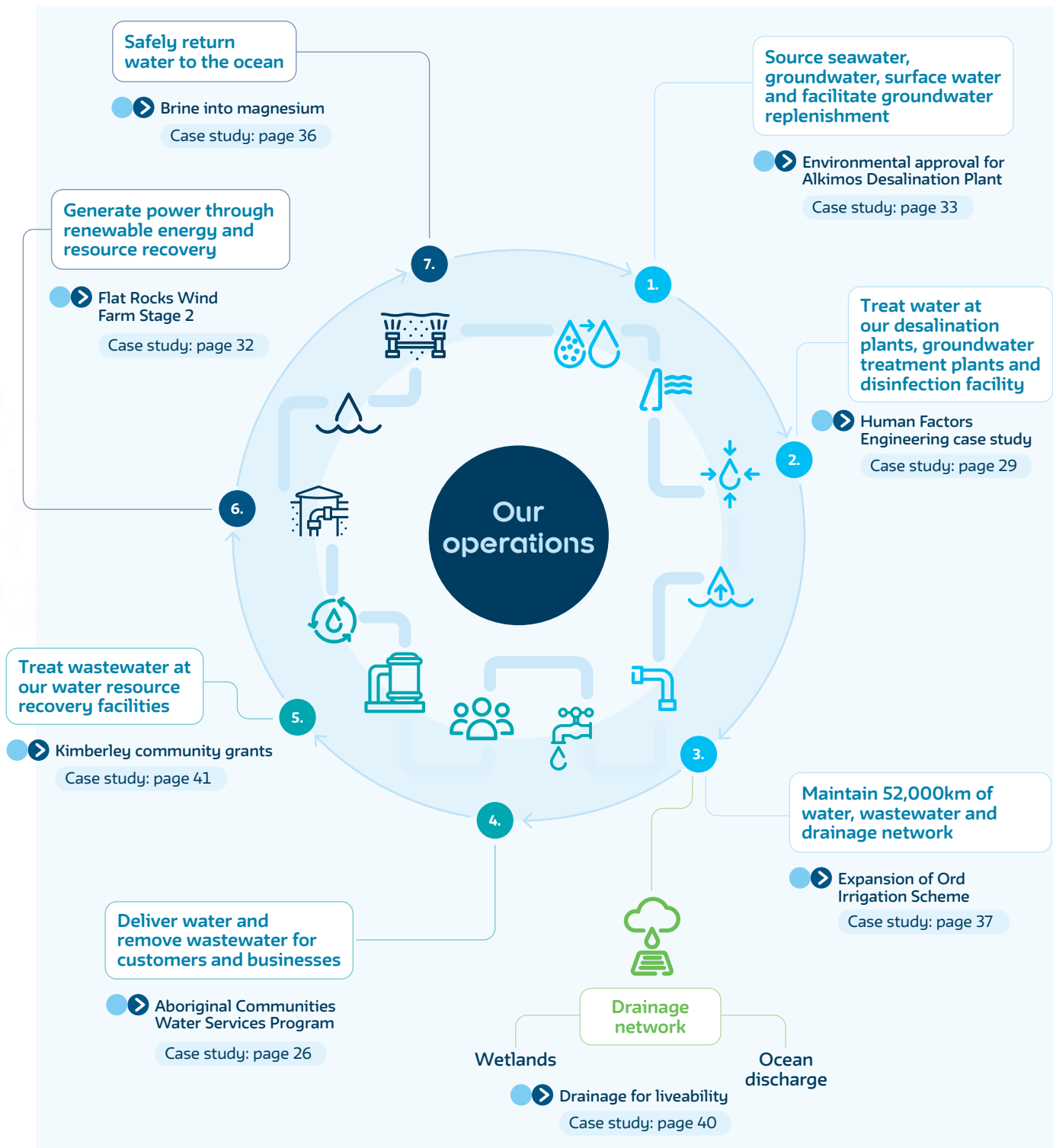
It represents the soul, spirit and breath of our First Nations Australians and is the lifeblood flowing through our people, communities and environment. From waking up to a cup of coffee to our last evening flush, we interact with this precious resource on so many levels, it's easy to take for granted.

For the 4,043 Water Corporation employees across WA, sustainably managing water, wastewater and drainage services through a network of pipes spanning millions of kilometres, is a huge responsibility.

Because at Water Corporation, we aren't just providing clean, safe water to 1.3 million customers. We are also re-using waste to power our operations and supporting state development through energy transition.

As we face increasing pressures due to climate change, a growing population, industrial demand, and rising costs, we also have a responsibility to enrich communities where water services have broad environmental and social values. We must anchor our operations to customer values by co-designing solutions and partnering with industry and government to meet net zero ambitions.

Together, by focusing our efforts on our Thrive2035 corporate objectives, we are making sure Western Australians Thrive by 2035.



Safety for our customers, community and employees

Water is at the core of sustainable development. Everyone has the right to access safe water from secure sources – whether your family has been here five years or 5,000 generations.

Yet, in Western Australia today, around 70 per cent of our Aboriginal communities are not connected to a regulated water service. With an acute focus on seeing our state thrive, we are on a mission to ensure everyone receives the same standard of water services, regardless of location.

SAFE FOR ALL - ABORIGINAL COMMUNITIES WATER SERVICES

The WA government is taking major steps in standardising water and power services across the state. Responsibility for these services in 141 Aboriginal communities has moved from the Department of Communities to Water Corporation and Horizon Power. Together, the two utilities will work to deliver safe and reliable water and power to these communities over the next 10 years. Our contribution to this body of work is known as the Aboriginal Communities Water Services (ACWS) program.

We are co-designing solutions that are led by communities with local knowledge and experience. Every step of the way we continue to listen to local voices and, in return, be transparent with the rationale for decisions and any relevant challenges.

CASE STUDY

TOWN PROFILE - DJARINDJIN



Djarindjin is one of the 141 communities being upgraded. Sitting on Bardi Jawi native title determined land, Djarindjin includes an area that the Goolarrgoon people call home. It is situated 196km north of Broome, with a population of approximately 400 people.

Water Corporation has been working with the Djarindjin community since July 2020. We listen respectfully to the Djarindjin community to understand their unique water experiences and needs. By working collaboratively with communities, we are able to build trust, form sustainable relationships, achieve meaningful solutions, and help create an environment where self-determination can thrive.

Safe, reliable water builds strong communities and encourages investment in local communities and people. As part of our community-led approach, we have completed asset investigation work, and are currently collaborating on a co-designed upgrade plan.



Our CEO joined the Aboriginal Community Water Services team for a cultural tour near Djarindjin





Munglinup carted water tanks in Ravensthorpe

Major works planned for Djarindjin include:

- building and equipping a bore as a new water source
- a water treatment plant
- the construction of a pipeline to connect the community to the new water supply.

These upgrades will significantly improve reliability and water quality for the community.

There are 91 water connections with data loggers being installed in Djarindjin. For the first time, residents will have oversight over how much water they are using.

Our work to date with the Djarindjin community demonstrates our commitment to drive positive outcomes for Aboriginal people, communities, employees, suppliers and contractors.

The concept of safety presents itself in many forms at Water Corporation daily. From devastating floods, to cyber security threats, to the mental health of our staff - safety is our top priority. We are always striving for continuous improvement to keep WA safe. Here are a few of our challenges and triumphs this financial year.

FLOODING IN THE KIMBERLEY

Teams from across Water Corporation united to support the state's response to the largest flood event in WA history. From late-December 2022 into early-January 2023, up to 500mm of rainfall inundated several towns, including Fitzroy Crossing, Camballin, Derby and Broome.

Thorough preparation by our North West team prevented major disruption to water services but we were unable to prevent damage to a wastewater pipeline attached to the Fitzroy River (Martuwarra) Bridge.

The team was quick to mobilise support for the local community. Some members of our Perth-based field team even hitched a ride to Fitzroy Crossing aboard a Department of Defence Chinook helicopter.

Despite high water levels making site access a challenge, crews worked tirelessly on interim repairs to the main to stop wastewater entering the river. This was no mean feat considering the stifling temperatures, and difficulty moving people and materials into the area.

In total, more than fifty employees were involved in the response, including West Kimberley district, regional projects team, water quality experts, communications, procurement, safety and metropolitan operations.

We have replaced the damaged wastewater main, which involved tunnelling underneath the river to increase protection from catastrophic weather events in the future.

BUSHFIRES IN THE GREAT SOUTHERN

While our North West team was responding to a once-in-a-century flood, our people in the Great Southern were contending with bushfires. In February, firefighters and emergency crews battled multiple fires ignited by lightning strikes in Hopetoun, Ravensthorpe and Munglinup.

Our people were up against a multitude of barriers, including isolated roads and a water bombing plane crashing into the Fitzgerald River National Park. This escalated the incident to a new level.

It was 'all systems go' as trucks transported power generators between towns and water carting commenced. With generators at our borefields, we were prepped to continue supplying water in the event of a power outage.

A couple of weeks later, further fires broke out in Esperance, Munglinup, Albany and Ravensthorpe.

One hundred per cent of Munglinup’s water is carted into the town. With the fires causing road closures, there was a serious risk to its water supply, not to mention the safety of our crews moving in and out of the area.

However, with the help of emergency services teams, we were able to maintain supply to the community, and avoid damage to our assets.

Responding to incidents takes a massive amount of on-the-ground support and behind-the-scenes logistics. Thanks to the combined efforts of everyone involved, we were able to keep our people safe during the floods and fires we experienced this year.

CYBER SECURITY

Throughout the years we have increasingly relied on technology to deliver water, wastewater and drainage services across the state. Our systems help us carry out work safely and reliably, and are critical to preventing interruption to our essential services.

The security of our data, including that of our people, customer, financial, operational and asset data, is non-negotiable. For anyone who watches the news, cyber security is front of mind for many organisations.

To ensure we stay resilient in the face of cyber threats, we are uplifting our technology maturity across the organisation.

This year, we commenced an Information Management Program to improve data security, accessibility and reliability across all areas of the business.

To support the rollout of this program, new policies, frameworks, standards and training were developed in line with Thrive2035 corporate objectives.

The project still has more to do in implementing a data catalogue and supporting the development of capabilities in the newly formed Information Management Centre of Excellence (IMCoE).

The IMCoE provides skills, tools, processes and support to enable the establishment of a sustainable model for business-led continuous improvement of information.

‘A great place to work’ is a core objective, woven into the fabric of our organisation. A huge part of this is making sure our people feel safe. Here are some of the ways we bring this objective to life.

CHAMPIONING MENTAL HEALTH ACROSS THE STATE

Supporting the wellbeing of our staff is an ever-evolving journey. This is why we are continually improving access to resources. We now recognise mental wellbeing as part of our Safety Corporate Risk. We have adopted new Healthy Minds Safety Essential training, and introduced mandatory Blooming Minds Flourishing Workplace training for all employees.

Every quarter, around 800-1,000 intentional mental health conversations are conducted at Water Corporation. This means roughly 25 per cent of our workforce is engaged in these chats.

With the adoption of the new Code of Practice for Psychosocial Hazards in the Workplace, our flagship Mental Health Champion program continued to grow. We were able to educate teams in addressing key workplace hazards through our champions. We now have 300 champions across the organisation, with our fourth cohort of employees having been trained and inducted earlier this financial year.

During a recent survey, 93 per cent of employees acknowledged there is awareness of mental health at Water Corporation, and 87 per cent of surveyed employees felt they would be supported by their immediate manager if they raised a mental health issue.

Importantly, we empower our people to stop a task when they feel unsafe. Identifying when workers feel unsafe, or a change occurs on site, offers significant insight into the planning aspects of each job. However, more than that, each time a job is stopped on site an incident may have been prevented.

Mental Health performance



*approximately 90 each quarter (1,033 since inception of program in 2020)



DRIVING SAFETY HOME

The Big Breakfast Roadshow has continued around the state this year. This rewarding activity, which started in 2021, provides our employees with the unique opportunity of directly engaging with the General Manager of Operations and Head of Safety and Wellbeing over a cooked breakfast.

A total of 14 meetings were carried out in every region this financial year. Key highlights of the engagement led to the optimisation of procedures and enhancements to local procurement process, which allowed teams to access vital equipment more efficiently. This will vastly improve the quality of customer service provided.

The breakfast conversations also shone a light on the need to drive accountability of asset performance and consistency across the state. The roadshow is only gaining momentum across the business and is a significant part of our push for safer workplaces.

STATE-WIDE SAFETY COMMITMENT

Our key safety assurance process reached a new milestone during the financial year. Our Safe Job Planning Program was implemented state-wide. Through this process, team leaders and management observed 8,167 Water Corporation tasks and 1,705 so they could be rated on performance against site safety measures. We also implemented the widespread adoption of digital inspections, which leveraged existing technology solutions. This means that we can operate safely, without the burden of expense and time needed to make physical inspections on site.

CASE STUDY



THE HUMAN FACTOR

Part of the beauty of being human is that no two people are exactly the same. Acknowledging this also means accepting it has an impact on the design and implementation of projects and assets. This financial year, we embarked on a journey to become the first water utility in Australia (if not globally) to formally integrate Human Factors Engineering (HFE) into our projects. This not only allows us to safely and efficiently manage our operations, but also puts us on the right path to satisfying our other Thrive2035 objectives of Safe for All, Great Place to Work, and Satisfied Customer.

HFE applies the knowledge of human capabilities, or 'how humans do things', to the design, operation and maintenance of technological systems. By applying the science of HFE around people at work, we can:

- reduce the consequences of human error
- improve safety performance, human reliability, efficiency, effectiveness, and user acceptance of new plants or facilities
- reduce capital and operational expenditure costs by contributing to a more efficient design
- reduce the risk of late changes or re-work after construction
- improve operability and maintainability of new assets.

So far, 10 internal projects have had Human Factors Engineering applied to them. The most notable project for inclusion is the new Alkimos Seawater Desalination Plant (ASDP).



Enabling us to sustainably finance our vision

In order to meet our Thrive2035 objectives and achieve the ambitions of our corporate strategy, we need to deliver significant business change.

This financial year, we have undergone changes in leadership, structure, and the prioritisation of activity that delivers Thrive2035 and the highest value back to our community, customers and state.

TRANSFORMATION

Our corporate strategy is ambitious and will require significant transformational effort across the business. The Transformation Office was set up this financial year to enable the transformative change required for Water Corporation to thrive.

With the appointment of Jacque Harding as General Manager of the Transformation Office, the team is working collaboratively across the organisation to:

- schedule and prioritise projects and group plan initiatives
- manage portfolio inter-dependencies risks and issue resolution
- lead change management and people transformation
- review our operating model to understand what is required to deliver Thrive2035
- provide data-driven insights to enable performance and process improvement.

DRIVING EFFICIENCY

The Focus Challenge is one example of the prioritised transformation portfolio initiatives.

Our aim is to save \$40 million in operational expenditure in the 2023-24 financial year. The savings will help sustainability finance key strategic initiatives and set us on the pathway to successfully deliver our Thrive2035 efficiency targets.

REDUCTION IN WATER LOSS THROUGH EVAPORATION

Evaporation of water from open storage poses a threat to our reliable supply. In the case of insufficient stored water, usually the only option available to residents is to cart water, which can be very costly, and increases our carbon footprint while supplying water.

In collaboration with The University of Western Australia, we have undertaken research to understand the effectiveness and cost-benefits of reducing evaporation and determining the overall value of the water saving. As part of the research, we installed Hexa-Covers, a tessellated floating cover made from recycled plastic. This product was chosen to trial as it reduces contact with the air, which in turn means reduced evaporation. These floating covers may also help with water quality issues by reducing the risk of birdlife and wind-borne contaminants entering the water body.

The trial produced a 73 per cent reduction in evaporation, as well as additional benefits in improving water quality for many key parameters, including a reduction in algae concentration. The solution also proved to be cost effective, leading to implementation at three sites in the Great Southern Region - Ravensthorpe, Salmon Gums and Lake King.

This financial year we have continued to deliver programs to assist our most financially vulnerable customers, placing more emphasis on early intervention, support programs, home visits, and flexible payment options. Here's a snapshot of the support we offer.

FINANCIAL HARDSHIP REVIEW

Given the cost of living crisis throughout the financial year 2022-23, we have been reviewing our hardship programs to assist more of our vulnerable customers to manage their living expenses. Five workshops have been conducted across the organisation, with representatives from Water Corporation, financial counsellors, and customers who are having difficulty paying their bill. These groups have provided valuable insight from customer and business perspectives, and will assist greatly with the updated programs.



HARDSHIP UTILITY GRANT SCHEME

We are currently supporting nearly 600 customers experiencing family and domestic violence. A new process has been implemented in conjunction with the Department of Communities to assist customers with mental health issues and those experiencing family and domestic violence. We are now able to submit outside-of-guidelines applications, which has resulted in customers only needing to tell their story once and receive financial assistance to reduce their account balances.

E-CONCESSIONS PROJECT

We have a new concessions platform built into our website. This has vastly improved the online experience by allowing customers to update and access their concession entitlements.

The next stage of the project is to implement a portal for our Local Government and utilities customers so they can securely download concession application and cancellation certificates.

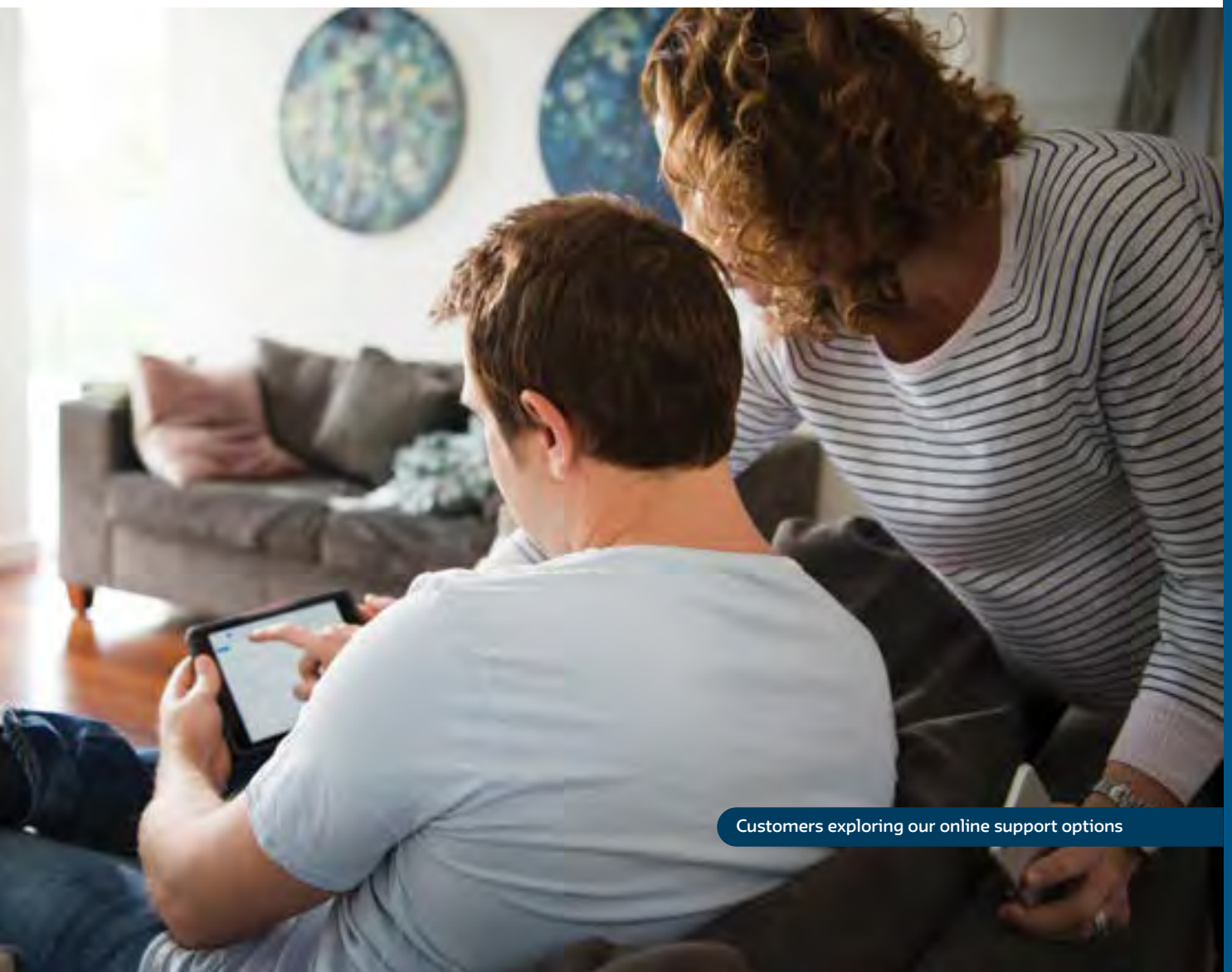
PUBLIC HOUSING WATER EFFICIENCY PROGRAMS

As part of our Waterwise Public Housing Project, 875 government-owned properties have been retrofitted with water-efficient fixtures, such as showerheads, toilets and taps. This has been delivered in partnership with the Department of Communities.

Leaks were repaired, and advice was provided to help tenants make waterwise changes to their daily lives. The program helped save 133 million litres of drinking water throughout 2022-23 and prompted a 19 per cent reduction in annual household water use.

Since its inception in 2019, the project has saved 373 million litres of precious water across the state and reduced household water bills substantially.

This year, Water Corporation and the Department of Communities delivered a waterwise exemplar garden at a Mosman Park public housing complex to reduce water use and provide a space for the senior residents to enjoy. More than 3,000 native shrubs, 10 native trees and 20 fruit trees were planted, with residents co-designing the garden with The Forever Project.



Customers exploring our online support options



Accelerating environmental sustainability of the water cycle as our climate changes

Around half of Perth’s drinking water comes from the Indian Ocean, but treating seawater to remove salt and impurities is extremely energy intensive. If we are to meet our Thrive2035 goals, delivering water and wastewater services with renewable energy is essential.

CASE STUDY

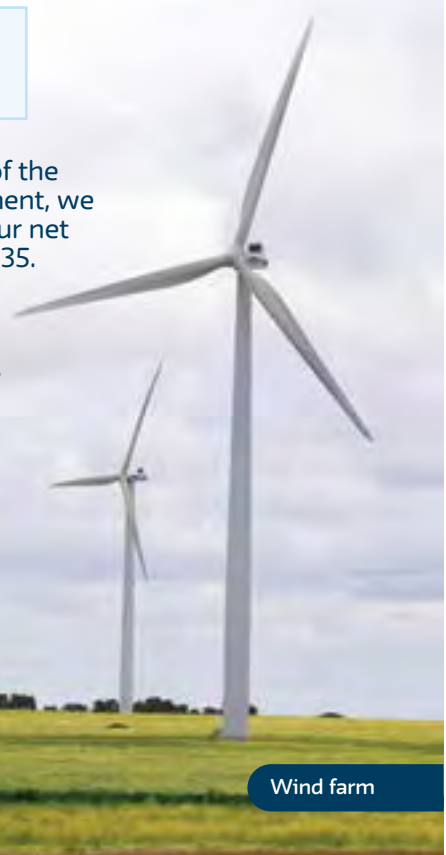


FLAT ROCKS WIND FARM STAGE 2

Our desalination plants give us the unenviable role of being one of the highest electricity users on the grid. To help protect our environment, we have committed to securing renewable energy to help us reach our net zero greenhouse gas Scope 1 and Scope 2 emissions target by 2035.

We are now the proud developers of the 92.4MW Flat Rocks Wind Farm Stage 2. This is one of the largest wind energy projects in WA and will be built 30km from Kojonup. Once commissioned, this asset will generate around a quarter of the total renewable energy required to achieve our target of net zero emissions across all operations by 2035.

To put 92.4MW into perspective, that’s enough power to sustainably provide water to 600,000 homes annually. We are working with Western Power, the community and other partners to complete the project.



Wind farm

SEQUESTERING CARBON THROUGH PINE PLANTATIONS AND REVEGETATION

This financial year, we successfully amended our Emissions Reduction Fund. This was established under the *Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Act 2011* by the Commonwealth Clean Energy Regulator to include a total of 1,350 ha of carbon sequestering pine plantation.

Since 2021, we have worked in partnership with the Forest Products Commission to implement two pine plantations within the Shire of Boyup Brook and Boddington. There are more than 1.7 million pine trees planted across our two plantations. Together, they are projected to generate over 350,000 Australian Carbon Credit Units over the next 18 years, by sequestering carbon from our atmosphere and soils.

In addition, we have continued our partnership with Carbon Positive Australia to plant 240 hectares of native vegetation to sequester nearly 30,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (CO₂-e) over the next 25 years. This is more than equivalent to our entire fleet vehicle emissions during the financial year.

The 240 hectares of biodiverse native vegetation was undertaken at Eurady Reserve in Nada Country in the Shire of Northhampton. Eurady Reserve, purchased by Bush Heritage Australia in 2005, is in the process of being registered under the Commonwealth Emissions Reduction Fund.

Carbon Positive Australia aims to restore over 1,300 ha of cleared vegetation in Eurady, with a mix of native trees and shrubs. This protects the land from further degradation and habitat loss.



To reach our Thrive2035 goals, we need to have a clear understanding of our impact on the environment, so are working on a way to accurately measure and reduce our emissions.

INSTALLING PERMANENT GHG MONITORING SYSTEMS

We are at the forefront of worldwide research to directly measure GHG emissions. As part of this research, we are installing monitoring systems at all our major metropolitan water resource recovery facilities.

This allows us to conduct research into wastewater network odours and hazardous gases, along with measurement and modelling in sewer networks.

We've partnered with the University of Queensland's Fugitive Emissions Research team, the leading authority on utility GHG mitigation strategies in Australia. The team's research is focused on minimising direct GHG emissions from urban wastewater systems.

We have also commenced a project with The University of Western Australia, Melbourne Water and TasWater to address the knowledge gap on the measurement of GHG emissions at regional wastewater pond treatment plants. This project spans our many different pond treatment processes and geographical locations.

Throughout the stages of these research projects, we are collaborating on the development of standardised reporting methods in Australia and around the world.

ENSURING OUR WASTE ISN'T WASTED

Another objective of our research and development area this year was a focus on waste reduction.

Water and wastewater treatment sludges are often sent to landfill where there is no current viable recycling option. Over 99% of carbon dioxide captured by bio-mass re-enters our atmosphere as part of the natural carbon cycle.

We have teamed up with Murdoch University's Centre of Rhizobium Studies to look at the potential of turning the sludge into biochar. Biochar is a charcoal-like product made by heating organic matter (such as wastewater treatment sludge) in a controlled process with limited oxygen, called pyrolysis. When used as a soil amendment (or fertiliser), the product captures and makes negative emissions possible by intercepting the cycle and converting carbon into a form that is typically stable for centuries to millennia.

We investigated biochar types for improving broadacre agricultural practices. Our research specifically focused on biochar being a suitable nutrient and carbon source to improve legume productivity.



Biochar Field Trial of Lentils at Goomalling

We sourced biochar from our waste streams, such as powdered activated carbon from the Denmark Wastewater Treatment Plant and solid waste from tree farms and our other plants.

The research showed our biochar was effectively used in the legume industry and successfully demonstrated another way for our waste products to avoid landfill or being incinerated. This opens the door for further research into carbon sequestering and offers an alternative to chemical nitrogen fertilisers.

It takes a passionate and determined cast of thousands to secure our water future. Working together across the state, here are other initiatives which are also propelling us down the road to net zero.

CASE STUDY

ALKIMOS SEAWATER DESALINATION PLANT - OUR NEXT MAJOR SOURCE



This year, Water Corporation substantially progressed the environmental assessment of Perth's next major water source.

Last financial year, the WA Government announced the next major new source would be a seawater desalination plant at Alkimos. Declining rainfall and our growing population require us to reduce our dependence on rainfall and groundwater as a drinking water source. The ASDP will provide a secure sustainable drinking water source to the Integrated Water Supply Scheme.

Supporting the Western Australia Climate Policy (2020), we are committing to construct and operate the ASDP with net zero Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions. This means any greenhouse gas emissions produced through the construction and operation of ASDP will be avoided, minimised or offset.

Thrive2035 goals have shaped how we have proposed to construct and operate ASDP, including many environmental commitments fundamentally aligned to accelerating environmental sustainability of the water cycle as our climate changes. Our commitments include:

To counterbalance essential native vegetation clearing, we have secured approximately 10 times the area proposed to be cleared for inclusion into conservation areas managed by the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions. Some of this area includes nearly 70ha of revegetation to create new Black Cockatoo foraging habitat.

Following further public consultation on the proposal, the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA) considered the implementation and operation of ASDP, published its report, and sent recommendations to the Western Australian Minister for Environment in May 2023. The EPA recommended that the proposal may be implemented subject to conditions reflecting Water Corporation's environmental commitments proposed as part of implementing and operating ASDP.

At full capacity, the plant will provide 100 billion litres of drinking water per year, with the first stage, to provide 50 billion litres, operational in 2028. Under our new source development program, ASDP will be the first key step towards delivering up to 125 billion litres per year of additional supply to meet the expected demand by 2035.



Our Boddington Pine Plantation registered under the Emissions Reduction Fund

POSITIVE LAND AND WATER IMPACTS

Thrive2035 views net clearing as a lead indicator for positive land and water impacts. At a minimum, we plan to revegetate the same area of vegetation that we clear in the process of delivering our water and wastewater services.

This financial year saw continued collaboration with the Department of Biodiversity Conservation and Attractions (DBCA) as part of our commitment to positive land and water impacts. Since the implementation of this initiative in 2019, we have voluntarily revegetated in excess of 235ha to counterbalance approximately 191ha of clearing. This was needed to support the planning, delivery and maintenance of services across the state.

A focus on the expansion of existing revegetation sites for enhanced environmental values saw approximately 83ha of land revegetated this financial year. Revegetation projects this year included an additional 50ha planted at the Lakeland Nature Reserve in the Wheatbelt and an extra 33ha at the former Gngangara Pine Plantation site, situated within the City of Wanneroo.



Perth is becoming a leading waterwise city

Climate change is leaving a worrying footprint on Perth and the south west of our state. Since the late 1970s, rainfall in the region has declined by up to 20 per cent overall. At the same time, urban development and the demand for water are continuing to grow. A key challenge for us is determining how we can create and maintain highly liveable communities when natural water sources continue to decline.

CASE STUDY

**WATERWISE CITIES PROGRAM
FIVE-YEAR SUMMARY**



To meet this challenge, we commenced a five-year Waterwise Cities Program in 2018 with the ambition of making Perth a leading global waterwise city. The program has been a catalyst for change, embedding waterwise thinking into our organisation and through our partnerships with a range of organisations to ensure our city is liveable, resilient, sustainable and productive.

Achievements under the five-year program include:

<p>Delivery of the H²OME study, our largest residential water-use study ever undertaken, helping us better understand water use in the home and garden, plan for Perth's water future, and design targeted programs to help households save water</p>	<p>1,965 million litres of water saved through residential waterwise offers and rebates and initiatives with schools, businesses and other sectors</p>	<p>Planning for Perth and Peel's water supply needs up to 2050, including drinking water, wastewater and drainage services, as well as a portfolio of recycling options for industry, agriculture and green space watering</p>
<p>26 of our drainage and other assets transformed into living streams, wetlands and community gardens to increase community access to green space and improve biodiversity under our Drainage for Liveability program</p>	<p>Over 198,000 waterwise plants, 1,126 verge transformations and 6,779 waterwise trees planted to increase biodiversity and cool urban environments under our Waterwise Greening Scheme and Local Government Urban Canopy Grant Program in partnership with local governments</p>	<p>100 per cent of metro local governments endorsed as Waterwise Councils, with 88 per cent of councils achieving Gold recognition as leaders in creating waterwise communities</p>
<p>Multi-sensory educational resources developed, and the reach of the Waterwise Schools Education Program expanded, teaching students about Perth's water cycle and sources, water in Aboriginal culture, and how to be waterwise</p>	<p>Contributing to a 26 per cent improvement in our urban water management performance score over five years, as measured by the national Water Sensitive Cities Index benchmarking tool, indicating Perth has become a waterwise city in Australia</p>	<p>Contributing to Perth's Water Sensitive Transition Network, a network of leaders from government, industry, research and community organisations working together towards the vision of a waterwise Perth. The work of this network was recognised internationally, receiving a bronze medal in the Governance, Institutions and Social Enterprise category at the International Water Association's Project Innovation Awards, held in Copenhagen in 2022</p>

Even though the five-year program has now transitioned into our core business, our waterwise focus continues. The goals of a waterwise city are reflected in our Thrive2035 strategy, including water recycling, water efficiency and net zero emissions targets.



Water services partner of choice for state development

Climate change, increasing community expectations, emerging markets and demand for a future-ready workforce are all pushing us to make big leaps in the way we responds to critical challenges and opportunities.

We have continued to explore collaborative opportunities that contribute to the WA Government’s priorities, including a strong economy, regional prosperity and a thriving, liveable environment.

In response to this rapidly changing landscape, teamed with the urgent need to deliver our Thrive2035 strategic goals, we created the Growth Portfolio.

The Growth Portfolio is responsible for identifying potential new revenue streams, delivering commercial and infrastructure initiatives, identifying partnership opportunities, and collaborating with other Government agencies, the private sector, and relevant communities.

Secondly, the growing global awareness of environmental, social and governance (ESG) will attract many direct and end-market customers looking for ‘green’ raw inputs in their supply chain and provide an additional barrier to competition. The strong demand has already been demonstrated by a range of local participants, such as Magnium Australia and the Rare Earth Elements industry.

Overall, our intention will be to operate the project on a net zero basis and produce a product that is less energy and pollution intensive than products traditionally available in the market.

CASE STUDY

FEASIBILITY OF MAGNESIUM

The WA Government has committed up to \$2 million, matched by Water Corporation, for a detailed feasibility study into producing magnesium hydroxide.

Our desalination process produces a by-product, brine, which we currently release back into the ocean. But brine represents a valuable source of critical materials, such as magnesium.

We are completing the study in partnership with the South West Development Commission and the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation.

With Thrive2035 strategic priorities concentrated on supporting state development, environmental sustainability, and local solutions, our efforts are focused in the right direction. Pending the feasibility results, we can potentially provide magnesium hydroxide to the industry. Magnesium hydroxide can be used as a feedstock to support supply chains in aerospace and transport sectors, as well as in the production of other critical metals, including titanium.

We are well-placed to extract further value from brine. Firstly, we have access to large quantities of desalination brine as a feedstock for magnesium hydroxide production.

AUSTRALIA’S FIRST LOW-COST HYDROGEN PROJECT

A renewable hydrogen project near Waroona is on the pathway to production as we have signed a major 15-year water supply agreement.

Western Australia-based Frontier Energy’s Bristol Springs Green Hydrogen Project is expected to be one of the first, low-cost renewable hydrogen projects in Australia. Production is due to commence in 2025 with Stage One production forecast at approximately 4.4 million kilograms of renewable hydrogen each year.

Water is an essential component of renewable, or green hydrogen, where water is split into hydrogen and oxygen via electrolysis using renewable electricity.

The electrolyzers for the first stage of the Bristol Springs Project will be powered by Frontier Energy’s 114MW industrial solar farm, with any excess renewable energy sold into the grid.





Kununurra Diversion Dam on the Ord River

Supporting the WA Government’s pipeline of hydrogen investment, the 15-year agreement is our first contracted commercial supply to a renewable hydrogen facility. Supply will be from existing scheme capacity with future increases to support the project’s expansion.

Uses for renewable hydrogen include transport, industrial feedstock, electricity generation, and blending into the natural gas supply.

NEW HOMES IN THE PIPELINE TO SUPPORT METRONET

To support the creation of more diverse, affordable housing, we are establishing strategic water and wastewater infrastructure for more than 15,000 new homes across Perth.

Infrastructure will be delivered at seven METRONET precincts, including Bennett Springs, Morley, Malaga, the future Yanchep Station, and around existing stations at Redcliffe, Meltham and Kelmscott.

Development precincts in Kenwick and Maddington will also benefit from connections to reticulated wastewater infrastructure, with works at Kenwick to commence first.

Special Development Contribution Areas will be created to ensure the state investment is recouped fairly and equitably from future developers that benefit from planned upgrades.

CASE STUDY

EXPANSION OF THE ORD IRRIGATION SCHEME



The Ord Irrigation Scheme is Western Australia’s largest irrigation system by water volume. Located in the East Kimberley region, the irrigation system is serviced by the Ord Dam, Lake Argyle and Kununurra Diversion Dam and Lake Kununurra.

The existing irrigated farmland is used for a variety of agricultural crops including maize, cotton, mango, citrus, watermelon, rockmelons, pumpkin, chickpeas, sandalwood and chia.

Through state agreements and the expansion of available irrigable land, the irrigation scheme is undergoing an expansion and volume capability upgrade. This upgrade will increase available irrigation water supply to the Knox Farmlands with 570 million litres a day for the irrigation of a further 5,600ha of farmland.

This kind of agricultural progress in the Ord paves the way for new industries and provides genuine employment opportunities.

The new farmland area will also play an important role in the region’s burgeoning cotton industry, backed by local growers and Traditional Owners.





Future proofing Albany's water supply

UNLOCKING A NEW WATER SOURCE IN THE GREAT SOUTHERN

Climate change and a growing demand for water have put our existing groundwater sources under strain. On current projections, annual demand in the Great Southern Region will outstrip supply by 2030, with an additional 1.8 billion litres of drinking water per annum needed by 2050.

We're making great progress investigating potential new water sources for the Lower Great Southern Towns Water Supply Scheme (LGSTWSS). Both groundwater and desalination are options for the scheme which currently supplies more than 37,000 people in Albany, Mount Barker and Kendenup, as well as 4,000 residents in Denmark.

Partnering with communities for long-term solutions, we've explored how source options can be delivered in the required timeframe with the lowest environmental impact, and with the greatest long-term benefit to the region.

PROUDLY PARTNERING WITH ABORIGINAL SUPPLIERS

Each year, we purchase millions of dollars' worth of goods and services. To address key commitments made in our Reconciliation Action Plan, we are harnessing that purchasing power to achieve real change for Aboriginal Australians.

This financial year, we have almost tripled the value of contracts awarded to Aboriginal businesses across the state. To address inequity, we have awarded 5 per cent of contracts to Aboriginal suppliers.

The achievement follows our re-commitment to the WA Government's Aboriginal Procurement Policy which ensures Aboriginal businesses receive at least 3.5 per cent of awarded contracts.

To meet these government expectations, we made sure contracts also achieved best value for money and complied with existing procurement legislation, policies and internal obligations.

In November 2021, we hosted our third biennial Aboriginal supplier event, with the next one planned for November 2023. This provides our project managers the chance to present their capital works programs to Aboriginal businesses.

With the recent transfer of responsibility for water services from the Department of Communities to Water Corporation, three contracts for water and wastewater asset maintenance in Aboriginal communities were awarded to Aboriginal suppliers.

2023 TOTAL SOLAR ECLIPSE EVENT



With eyes around the world looking to catch a glimpse of this special occurrence, it was essential we played our part in supporting this important tourist event for Western Australia.

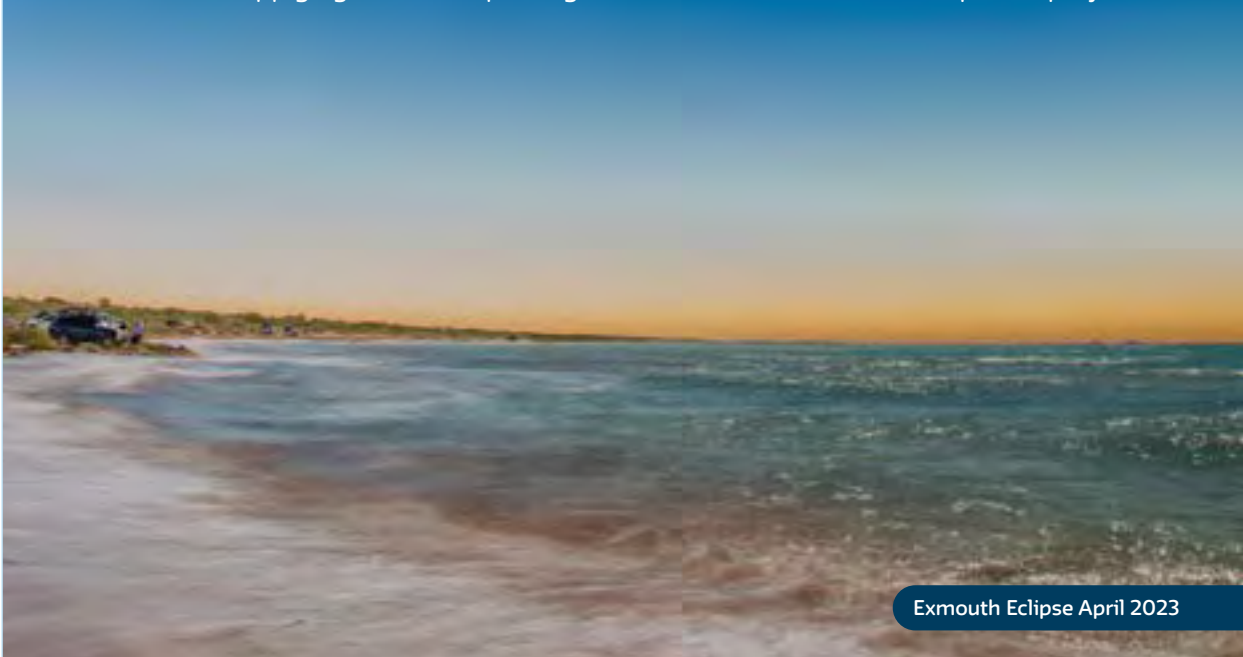
On 20 April 2023, more than 19,000 people from around the world gathered in Exmouth to witness a 62 second, rare spectacle – a total solar eclipse. With Exmouth’s permanent population of 2,700, and the usual holiday influx taking that up to around 6,000, there was the anticipation of additional pressure on the town’s water and wastewater supply.

To service the thousands of additional visitors, we played a significant part in a whole-of-government planning and working group to ensure visitors to Exmouth would enjoy the eclipse experience while protecting the pristine Ningaloo region.

To cater for the influx of visitors, we began early investigations into key infrastructure for maintenance requirements, and identified solutions to best serve the region for the event and to benefit the scheme into the future. We worked closely with the community, the Department of Jobs, Tourism, Science and Innovation, and key stakeholders to install a six million litre temporary tank to provide non-potable water to the Welch Street Campsite in Exmouth, along with the installation of permanent water infrastructure. Water supply at the nearby bore field was also upgraded to increase water supply by 300,000L per day.

Remedial works were also carried out at the wastewater treatment plant to prepare for increased wastewater during the event. On the demand management side, through respectful education and collaboration with the local community and businesses, we were able to save millions of litres of water through short-term alterations to gardening and commercial water use.

This project represents one of our biggest collaborations to date, working with representatives across 14 WA Government agencies in partnership with the local government to ensure communities in the region were supported for the event. It showcased our capability to be part of WA’s potential as a centre of collaboration and knowledge building, while developing strong working relationships and learnings to take into our own state development projects.



Exmouth Eclipse April 2023



Local solutions developed in partnership with local communities

We operate in a land of extremes. Record flooding in the Kimberley and record heat and drought in our South West bring vastly different goals to ensure our state remains liveable.

In the face of climate variability, education about the value of water, our reliance on desalination and our unique water cycle is imperative to driving greater customer value.

From Kimberley community grants and customer education programs, to urban greening and mitigating urban heat in Perth metro - we must educate, adapt, and seek customer-led solutions.

The Nurdi Park Living Stream and Wetland project in the City of Canning won the Excellence in Water Project Award at the Institute of Public Works Engineering Australasia WA Awards in 2023.

A total of 34 drainage assets have been transformed under the program since 2016. We proudly partner with organisations that drive the state's growth, increase awareness of our environment, and enable a greater platform to educate our community.

CASE STUDY

DRAINAGE FOR LIVEABILITY PROGRAM



This year, six of our drainage assets were transformed into living streams, wetlands and parks. These Drainage for Liveability initiatives improve biodiversity and create a healthier, sustainable water system for local communities.

We partnered with the City of Canning to transform an existing drain into the Lake Street urban stream. The urban stream will mimic a natural waterway and remove pollutants from stormwater. The space will be open to the public and provide a pedestrian link from Lake Street to Cecil Avenue.

We also partnered with the City of Armadale to support the Westfield Heron Wetland improvement works. Over a number of years, the City received requests for the upgrade of the reserve to provide greater open space amenity for the local community. The improvements included landscape planting and revegetation works, barbecue shelters and picnic furniture, more efficient bore and irrigation systems and connecting pathways.

PARTNERING WITH OZFISH - SEEDS FOR SNAPPER

Seagrass is important in our oceans as it not only provides shelter and food for fish and aquatic life but also stores carbon and nutrients. This improves water quality and helps combat the impacts of climate change. We have partnered with Ozfish to raise awareness about the ecological value of Perth's waterways and coastlines through funding and sharing our in-house engineering expertise.

Seagrass (*Posidonia australis*) fruit once a year. During this time, OzFish diving volunteers collect the fruit in nets to harvest. Once the fruit matures, it's processed in large onshore tanks. The seeds are then dispersed in areas ideal for seagrass meadow restoration. OzFish volunteer scientists and University of Western Australia (UWA) researchers continually monitor the area.



'Before' image of Lake Street drain



After the Lake Street urban stream transformation





Volunteer divers collecting fruit in Cockburn Sound

Developed with UWA, this approach has increased seedling density by up to 2,000 per cent, more than natural regrowth.

Collecting, processing, and distributing seagrass seeds requires a lot of effort and storage, so we provided our own engineers' expertise to design holding tanks and pumps as well as fund the charter boat to help disperse the seagrass seeds.

JULUWARLU COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP

This financial year we sponsored Juluwarlu Group Aboriginal Corporation, the arts subsidiary of Yindjibarndi Aboriginal Corporation in Karratha. The outcome was a theatrical performance called Ngurra Nyjunggamu (When the World Was Soft). The dramatic performance depicted the Yindjibarndi dreamtime stories from the Roebourne and Karratha areas. The performance was the opening event of Karratha's Red Earth Arts Festival in May 2023, with around 600 community members in attendance. Sharon Broad our North West Regional Manager, spoke at the event and we had an interactive stall promoting waterwise messages and our sponsorship set up during the festival.

This partnership encourages Aboriginal communities to thrive - which aligns with our commitments made in our Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow strategy and our Reconciliation Action Plan.

Historically, the relationship between Water Corporation and the Yindjibarndi people has been strained due to the building of the dam on Yindjibarndi sacred sites. However, by supporting this initiative, we have been able to build trust and offer support to the Yindjibarndi people in sharing and recognising their culture and ongoing connection to land.

CASE STUDY

KIMBERLEY COMMUNITY GRANTS SCHEME

The Kimberley Community Grants Scheme has been running since 2016, and in that time has donated over \$587,000 to community projects in the Kimberley that build an appreciation of nature, foster community wellbeing and make a positive difference to the lives of Kimberley residents.

Funding for the Kimberley Community Grants Scheme is generated from the sale of Rhodes Grass hay, which we grow at our Broome North Water Resource Recovery Facility (WRRF) as an environmentally-friendly means of disposing of recycled water.

In 2023's Round 9 of the Scheme, 14 not-for-profit groups in the Kimberley received grants totalling nearly \$70,000 to build projects that empower their communities across the region.

Fitzroy Valley Rodeo Club was a recipient of a Kimberley Community Grant in 2022 to set up an equine therapy program for vulnerable young people in the area. They received funding again in 2023 to rebuild the program after the devastating effects of the Fitzroy Crossing floods.



Kimberley Community Grant recipient - Fitzroy Valley Rodeo Club



We have built countless waterwise partnerships with our customers and communities, who have in turn maintained a focus on successfully delivering water efficiency outcomes.

SPRINKLER CHECK PROGRAM

Our popular Sprinkler Check program was offered again this year, aimed at helping customers waste less water on their gardens and to adapt to climate change.

Between August 2022 and May 2023, customers in Perth and Peel could access a free sprinkler check conducted by a Waterwise Irrigator. Over 1,880 services were delivered, and very positive feedback was provided by customers. The program was developed to help customers optimise the performance of their existing irrigation system in spring, providing the maximum opportunity for gardens to remain healthy during the hot summer months, while also minimising overwatering.

REBATES FOR WEATHER-SMART IRRIGATION CONTROLLERS

More than 1,460 customers took up our offer of rebates for weather-smart irrigation controllers this year, making the latest technology in water-saving irrigation practices more accessible to customers.

The rebates were available to customers who purchased approved products from Waterwise irrigation and garden design shops, and had their controller professionally installed by a Waterwise irrigation specialist to ensure watering rosters and other waterwise gardening practices were considered..

WATERWISE GARDEN ADVICE FOR BORE OWNERS

This year we offered free garden visits to domestic bore owners in the Perth and Peel regions. The new program was developed to help garden bore owners adapt to the new two-day per week watering roster. Over 550 customers took up the offer for a waterwise landscaper or garden designer to visit their property and advise on optimising soil condition, watering requirements of plants and alternative waterwise options, garden design and layout to reduce irrigation requirements while maintaining a thriving garden.



Customers trialling our weather-smart irrigation controller



NON-RESIDENTIAL PROGRAMS

Our Waterwise Council Program, delivered in partnership with the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), supports local governments to improve water efficiency and help create waterwise communities.

There are 64 local governments participating in the Waterwise Council Program, including all 32 metropolitan local governments.

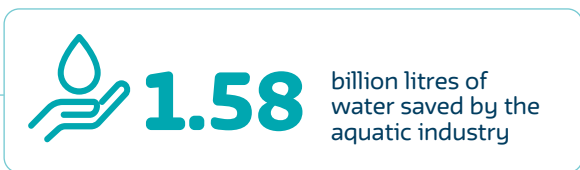
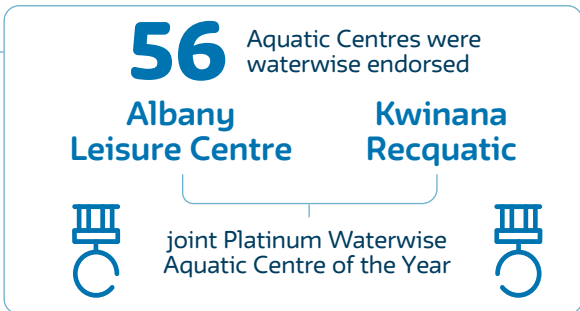
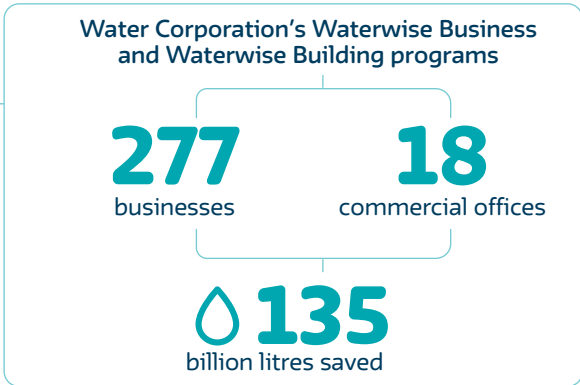
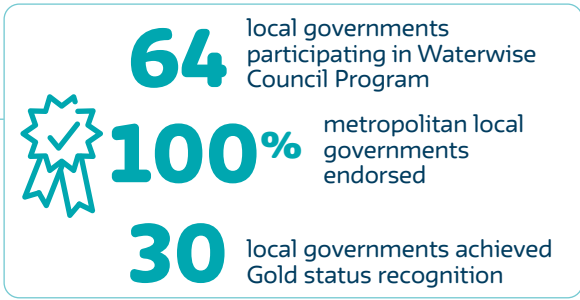
Two Local Governments - the City of Stirling and Town of Cambridge - were awarded WA's Platinum Waterwise Council of the Year 2023 bringing the total to 9 councils achieving Platinum status

The Waterwise Business Program provides water saving support to business customers that use more than 20 million litres of scheme water per annum. This year 277 businesses and 18 commercial offices were part of Water Corporation's Waterwise Business and Waterwise Building programs, which have saved more than 135 billion litres since 2007.

Under our Waterwise Aquatic Centre Program, delivered in partnership with the Leisure Institute of WA Aquatics, 56 aquatic centres are endorsed as Waterwise across WA, including 96 per cent of aquatic centres in the metropolitan area. Albany Leisure Centre and Kwinana Recquatic were named joint Platinum Waterwise Aquatic Centre of the Year, while Northam Aquatic Facility, in the Shire of Northam, and Swan Active Beechboro, in the City of Swan, earned Gold recognition.

The aquatic industry in total has saved 1.58 billion litres of water since 2008 - that's around 700 Olympic swimming pools of water.

The Waterwise Development Program has endorsed 25 developments since 2014. Subi East, by DevelopmentWA, joined the list in 2023 as a new leader in waterwise and sustainable housing design. Brabham Estate, in the City of Swan, was crowned Waterwise Development of the Year (developed by Peet Limited in collaboration with DevelopmentWA).





High school students engaging with our Waterwise Experience incursion

SMARTER CUSTOMER EXPERIENCES

Trialling smart metering

Today's customers have far higher expectations of service providers and want a clear view of water use patterns.

There is a lot of evidence from around the world to support the transition to smart metering. The technology allows customers greater visibility around their water use, reduces water loss caused by leaks, and improves operational efficiency.

Building on past trials in Kalgoorlie-Boulder and the North West, we have begun installing smart meters in Perth. The new meters take an automatic reading and detect leaks which removes the need for our employees to physically access customer properties. Outcomes from the smart metering trial program will inform the pace and scale of future rollouts of smart metering across the state.

Supply water alerts

In a network of our size, planned and unplanned repair work can lead to supply interruptions. Every year, more than 500,000 properties are impacted by water outages. We understand how disruptive this can be and know customers want time to plan for an interruption and reduce the impact.

We've taken a step towards improving the customer experience for outages by launching our Water Supply Alerts tool. The tool allows customers to receive alerts

via SMS or email to stay informed about outages affecting their home or business. Once they opt in, customers receive a notification for both planned and unplanned water outages, including outage times and when their supply is expected to resume.

After actively promoting the tool this financial year, we now have 40,000 customers signed up, with subscriptions continually on the rise. By redesigning this customer journey to initiate notifications before the work begins, we are putting the customer first and at the heart of our operating model.

WATERWISE SCHOOLS EDUCATION

The importance of teaching waterwise sustainability in schools has never been more evident. This is reflected in a record number of school bookings this financial year. We reached a whopping 42,345 students this financial year, with a record number of school bookings. These numbers tell us that teachers, as satisfied customers, value our program which directly aligns to the WA Curriculum.

Our Education Team delivers a range of waterwise incursions to increase the understanding of water sustainability concepts, including the importance of water in Aboriginal culture.

Educating young students on water supply and conservation concepts increases their water literacy, including the waterwise behaviour of students and their families.





Empowering our people to achieve our best performance

We've implemented a number of strategies designed to create a workplace as diverse as the communities we serve and target unconscious bias.



TAKING OUT THE BEST PLACE TO WORK AWARD

The Australian Financial Review / BOSS crowned us as Australia's Best Place to Work for Agriculture, Mining and Utilities for 2023.

The award celebrates some of the amazing groundwork our teams have laid through a variety of excellent people-focused initiatives. Our career entry, youth development, flexible working, diversity, and mental wellbeing programs helped our submission stand out from the rest. We were taken aback by the volume of people from across the business willing to advocate for us in the employee survey which was part of the selection process.

CELEBRATING OUR SUCCESSES



Throughout the financial year, there were a number of projects and people recognised for their accomplishments through coveted industry awards. These include:

Australian Water Association WA Awards:

- **Young Water Professional | Winner** | Phillip Meng
- **Organisational Intelligence | Finalist** | Operational Intelligence in Decision Making
- **R&D Excellence Award | Finalist** | Harvey River Restoration Demonstration Project with the Harvey River Restoration Taskforce
- **Infrastructure Project Innovation Award (METRO):** Neerabup Groundwater Scheme Expansion with GHD, Sacyr, Water Corporation and Westforce Construction

International Water Association: (IWA) Project Innovation Awards | **Bronze** | Groundwater Replenishment Scheme

The Australian Business Awards: Business Innovation | **Winner** | Visual Connect

The Civil Contractors Federation WA 2022 Earth Awards: | **Finalist** | Gngangara Branch Sewer Section 2 Rob Carr Pty Ltd and Water Corporation

2022 Australian Street Art Awards: Best External Mural | **Finalist** | Busselton Diversion Drain Street Art Mural



Miriwoong Gajerrong truth telling event

STRENGTH IN SHARED UNDERSTANDING

We want to see our people, communities and state thrive. We have implemented an Aboriginal engagement strategy named Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow. This strategy has been conceived to improve the overall employment experience for our Aboriginal employees. It works hand-in-hand with our proposed Reconciliation Action Plan, and asks us to expand our toolkit beyond frameworks and commitments to real and meaningful engagement with our people.

We are focused on equipping our workforce with the knowledge of Aboriginal experience and culture in as many ways, voices and perspectives as possible. There has never been a more important time for a bold approach to drive change.

EMPOWERING EMPLOYEE NETWORKS

We offer opportunities for workers and leaders to take part in our diversity and inclusion initiatives through social networks and employee working groups. These groups work in the areas of gender equity, people with disability, the LGBTQIA+ population, and culturally and linguistically diverse people.

The passionate members of our networks and working groups help to raise awareness through training, events and keeping our people informed with topical news.

BUILDING CONFIDENCE INTO RECRUITMENT

In February 2023, we achieved Disability Confident Recruiter status from Australian Network on Disability. The accreditation was received after a rigorous audit process on all the recruitment steps.





Yr 11 and 12 Deadly Sister Girlz students

Making our recruitment processes more accessible is a key step towards creating a workforce that is inclusive, and reflects the diversity of our customers and our community. From job advertisement right through to how we onboard candidates – we’ve assessed each step to address the potential barriers to participating in our recruitment process equitably.

Disability Confident Recruiter is run by the Australian Network on Disability which recognises organisations that meet the standards of the program as employers of choice for people with disability.

SUPPORTING PARTNERSHIPS

We know we need to foster partnerships to attract and build the pipeline of female talent into Water Corporation. One example of this is our Waalitj Foundation partnership supporting the Deadly Sista Girlz program. This partnership is a fantastic way to work collaboratively with women across the state to identify future career opportunities. If we can assist with mentorship and career pathways, we help our state to thrive.

LARGEST GRADUATE INTAKE IN 10 YEARS

We welcomed 44 new graduates in our January 2023 cohort. Our graduate program has evolved from typical science and

engineering to include finance, commerce, information technology, cybersecurity and data science to meet our growing needs.

Many of our graduates stay on to have fulfilling careers with us and continue to fill leadership roles including members of the Executive Team and senior managers.

We began our pilot of the Regional Graduate Leadership Program in 2023. This program was rolled out in an effort to transition graduates to leadership roles in Karratha, Geraldton, Bunbury and Albany towards the conclusion of their three-year rotation with us.

RETURNING TO WORK MADE EASIER

We’ve introduced a program for carers and parents who are looking for a supportive transition back to the workforce. As a progressive employer, leading the way in flexible and safe work, we have created this opportunity with flexibility, and highly structured coaching and mentoring sessions to ensure returners ease into their roles without a challenge. A webinar, presented by four of our female leaders was held, and candidates were given an insight into our supportive culture. The program is gaining momentum and attracting key talent that may not have been able to re-enter the workforce otherwise, which is highly attractive in a restricted labour market.



Our latest graduates