



Commission for the Environment

After the Diocesan Energy retrofit - Parish greywater conservation?

In the June column we reported that the contracts for the energy retrofitting of Diocesan buildings, including schools, had been signed. This month we offer parishes the opportunity to join with the Commission and a greywater management company in applying for an Australian Government Water Fund Community Water Grant.

Mission

At the June meeting of the Commission for the Environment, Bishop Browning asked the Commission to help the church community to think constructively about water by recommending an action that could be implemented now to support water conservation in diocesan facilities.

Such a recommendation would also introduce the church community to 'state of the art' household water systems likely to be in general use in 30 years.

The Commission's response was that future technology will incorporate systems based control of domestic water use that integrates secure (mains supply, plus greywater) and opportunistic (stormwater and tank collected runoff) water sources, and directs the available resources to appropriate 'fit for purpose' use - i.e. potable (drinking and bathing) and non-potable (toilet flushing, garden and external washdown).

(See the Commission's columns on water in the April and December 2005 issues of Anglican News at <http://www.pastornet.net.au/envcomm/News/news.html>).

In practice, the main requirements are for a household greywater system, and a systems controller to direct the water to the appropriate use. (The controller operates much as that in an automatic washing machine to direct hot and cold, soapy or clean water to the wash, rinse and spin cycles).

One such treatment and greywater management unit that does this is the Perpetual Water system developed by John Grimes in Canberra. These units treat greywater and use it for toilet flushing and garden watering (<http://www.perpetualwater.com.au/>). (In rural situations, units have been installed to collect the discharge from a septic tank and recycle it for non-potable use; water from a farm dam is treated and purified in the same process.) Perpetual Water has agreed



SHRINKING RESOURCE: Recycling grey water will help stretch available water resources in dry times.

with the Commission and will collaborate on a submission to install 10 (or more) of these units in the Diocese under an Australian Government Water Fund Community Water Grants project.

In selecting sites for the units to be installed, the Commission particularly, but not exclusively, wishes to support water-scarce towns and communities (eg Goulburn, Murrumbateman, Yass, Boorowa etc), and to become actively engaged in the project and in its local promotion and support.

Expressions of interest

The Commission is now calling for expressions of interest from Parishes with eligible facilities, and who are willing to become involved at all stages of the water recovery and recycling project.

Requirements for participating facilities :

- ♦ residential building with full time occupancy and usage of about 300+ kL pa. (or similar usage pattern);
- ♦ external space to retrofit a greywater unit and storage (that is not obtrusive);
- ♦ mains power to installation location;
- ♦ connected to mains water, and with rainwater tanks;
- ♦ (scope for) permanent reticulated garden watering system;
- ♦ NOT constructed with concrete slab foundations.

Requirements for communities

A commitment to:

- ♦ support water efficiency actions and become involved in the pilot project;
- ♦ mobilise local or community in-kind support or a financial contribution;
- ♦ carry out monitoring and reporting support tasks;

- ♦ engage a wider decision constituency (council or local groups).

Role of the Commission

The Commission for the Environment can:

- ♦ prepare the submission to the Australian government water fund;
- ♦ co-ordinate organisational arrangements including major project funding;
- ♦ oversight and coordinate major report production and meet governance requirements;
- ♦ liaise across parishes and outside the diocese, with stakeholders and partners;
- ♦ coordinate promotion, building awareness, linkages to the clergy and a spiritual context.

Follow up

If you believe that you may have an opportunity that meets the above requirements, please go to the Commission web-site and, under resources, obtain the checklist for suitability and use it on your buildings. You can also contact the Commission and we will discuss the proposal with you in more detail.

You should contact Bill Leane on 0402 119 141 or bill.lean@costbenefit.com.au

After initial telephone discussions, a member of the Commission and representative from Perpetual Water will visit the site to complete an on-ground assessment.

Successful project sites proceeding to the submission will be requested to form a committee to lead and coordinate the on-site installation, assist with fundraising and in-kind support, and plans for the implementation and management of the facility.

We look forward to hearing your response to these ideas and opportunities

Barry Richardson

Chair, Commission for the Environment