

## Statistics show water-efficient gardening on the wane

**Fewer Australian households are taking steps to save water in the garden, according to figures recently released by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (ABS).**



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Mark Lound from the ABS said the recent [Water Use and Conservation survey](#) collected information about water sources, water use and water conservation behaviours of Australian households.

‘While most Australian households (79 per cent) took at least one step to save water inside or outside their home in the last 12 months, there had been a change in behaviour when it came to saving water in the garden.

‘This may have been due to the easing of drought conditions and water restrictions in many areas,’ Mr Lound said.

‘Of those households with a garden, only 54 per cent took steps to save water in the garden, compared with 62 per cent in 2010 and 71 per cent in 2007.

‘A similar change in behaviour was apparent for most states and territories with less households taking steps to save water in Victoria (55 per cent in 2013 compared with 75 per cent in 2007), Queensland (49 per cent in 2013 compared with 70 per cent in 2007) and South Australia (59 per cent in 2013 compared with 78 per cent in 2007).

‘In contrast, the proportion of households that took at least one step to save water in the garden remained steady over the last six years in Western Australia (65 per cent in 2013 and 67 per cent in 2007).

‘Of the 3.9 million Australian households that saved water in the garden, common steps taken were using mulch (42 per cent), only watering the garden when necessary (34 per cent) and watering at cooler times of the day (29 per cent).

‘The use of water saving products around the home can also assist in reducing household water consumption.

‘The use of front loading washing machines has increased over the last three years. Over three million households (34 per cent) had a front loading washing machine in 2013 compared with 28 per cent in 2010.

‘Just over 2.3 million Australian households used a rainwater tank as a source of water in 2013. The proportion of households that used water from a rainwater tank has remained steady since 2010 (26 per cent), while usage has increased from 19 per cent in 2007.

‘South Australia had the highest proportion of households that used water from a rainwater tank (46 per cent), followed by Queensland (34 per cent) and Victoria (29 per cent).

‘Of those households living in a dwelling suitable for a rainwater tank, 34 per cent had a rainwater tank, compared with 32 per cent in 2010 and 24 per cent in 2007,’ Mr Lound said.

Source: ABS

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