

Policy on Water Minimisation

1.0 Policy Reference

This policy document refers to the following aims outlined in The Highland Council's Energy Management Performance Plan:

- Reduce the council's energy use by 15%
- Save £3.8M in energy costs
- Reduce CO₂ emissions by a minimum of 15%
- Increase the installed capacity of renewable energy by a minimum of 4,000kW

2.0 Introduction

Water is a vital part of everyday life! People use it at home, in the garden, on the farm and in the office. It is also essential to the continuing health of the natural environment; our Highland rivers, lochs, wetlands and the wildlife.

While Scotland does not currently experience water shortages, Climate Change is expected to lead to longer dry periods in the future, particularly during summer. For example, the Met Office reported that Jan-Jun 2010 was the driest in Scotland for 70 years. In contrast, water demand in Scotland continues to increase, with non-domestic water use predicted to rise 15% by 2015. To adapt to the expected changes in the seasonality of our water supply as a result of climate change it is important to reduce our use of water as much as practically possible

This will also:

- * Save money
- * Reduce carbon emissions.
- * Contribute to the continuing health of our valuable ecosystems.

3.0 Challenge

Water saving is about reducing the amount of water we waste; each person in Scotland currently uses about 150 litres a day, with a third of this being wasted.

The Highland Council is currently reviewing water use in all its buildings to identify where further savings can be made. In addition, the Council is undertaking a campaign to raise awareness and promote water minimisation in schools and amongst all council staff and Members.

Water efficiency is an essential part both of adapting to and tackling climate change. Water efficiency is an economic, social and environmental opportunity – it has an important role to play in the green economy while safeguarding the environment.

4.0 Aim

The Highland Council aims to reduce the water consumption within its properties by implementing water saving measures in all new and existing buildings and educating staff and occupants about the measures they can take to reduce their individual water consumption.

5.0 Measures

The measures which The Highland Council are implementing in all new and existing buildings are –

- The installation of water saving [Hippos](#); these are being installed in all old style 9ltr toilet cisterns within existing Highland Council buildings.
- Dual flush toilet cisterns; designed to save water due to the reduced amount used in each flush these must be installed within all new or renovated buildings.
- Spray flow taps on all sinks and basins in all new and refurbished Highland Council Buildings. These must be installed when designing a new building or renovating an existing one.
- The installation of aerators will be carried out on existing taps within Highland Council properties to minimise water use within buildings which are not currently being renovated.
- Hot water boilers; these have replaced kettles in all Highland Council office kitchenettes as they are more energy efficient than boiling a kettle repeatedly throughout the day.
- Urinal controls; all new and existing urinals shall have controls installed to minimise water use by reducing both the frequency of flush and quantity of water used in each flush.
- Maintenance to ensure no dripping taps, showers etc. - caretakers, janitors, facilities managers etc. will regularly monitor appliances and sanitary fittings and arrange for these to be fixed.
- The integration of rainwater and/or grey water systems within council properties is very much encouraged. If these can be designed into new and existing properties to greatly reduce the council's water consumption this would be a welcome addition to the M&E services. However, the installation of these systems must be part of an options appraisal carried out for the project and submitted to the council's Energy and Sustainability Team for review.