

Fact Sheet: **Cleaning practices**

Most commercial businesses have a variety of cleaning and rinsing applications that can consume large volumes of water. Many cleaning processes can be made significantly more efficient by simple measures. Some cleaning processes may be subject to water restrictions. Visit www.westernwater.com.au for current water restrictions information.

Potential water-saving opportunities

Behavioural change

- Cleaners should be supervised and educated on cleaning practices and efficient cleaning procedures should be defined.
- Ensure all cleaners understand the impact of hosing wastes/pollutants to sewer or stormwater systems, i.e. their effects on waterways and sewage treatment plants.
- Dry clean-up – use brooms, brushes, vacuums, squeegees, scrapers and other utensils to clean material before water is used. By collecting the majority of wastes, residues or contaminants in a dry form, large volumes of wastewater can be avoided. For example:
 - › Sweep floors instead of hosing with water.
 - › Vacuum or sweep dry material spills such as salt or dyes instead of using water.
 - › Use squeegees to collect food processing residues from the floor before hosing with water.
 - › Vacuum or sweep dust instead of hosing with water.
- Many floor surfaces do not need to be washed with water. If necessary, use dry absorbents and then sweep or vacuum these areas.
- Find and eliminate the source of spills and leaks that may be the sole reason why water washdowns are needed.
- Spot mop if necessary.
- Use floor mats, 'clean zones', and other methods to reduce the tracking of waste and dirt throughout the facility.
- Switch from wet carpet cleaning methods, such as steam cleaning, to dry powder methods.
- Outdoors:
 - › Sweep parking areas rather than washing, unless it's required for health reasons.
 - › Sweep paved areas.
 - › Reconsider the need to wash building exteriors or other outside structures.
 - › Where possible, reduce the frequency of cleaning external equipment and flooring.
 - › Change the window cleaning schedule from regular to as-required and use squeegees rather than hosing.

- › Wash vehicles only when needed unless necessary for operator safety.
- › Don't forget to check current water restrictions at www.westernwater.com.au

Cleaning consumes about 10 per cent of the water used in hotel guest rooms.

Equipment modifications

- Ensure all washing equipment is fitted with aerated spray nozzles and shutoff valves.
- Use efficient trigger spray nozzles on hoses.
- Consider high-pressure washers to clean more quickly and efficiently.
- Use low-flow 'fogging' nozzles to rinse parts efficiently.
- Use flow restrictors in water lines that supply hoses and pressure washers.
- Use timers to shut off process water rinses when process is shut down.
- Ensure stationary spray nozzles are aimed properly.
- Review nozzle spray patterns for optimum application.
- Equipment surfaces can be coated with a non-stick surface to allow for easier cleaning.
- Changes in the type, temperature and concentration of cleaning solutions can save water. Investigate the different types of cleaning products available.
- Wash vehicles less often; use a commercial carwash that recycles water.

Information for this fact sheet has been adapted from the City West Water "Water Conservation Solutions Handbook"

Further information

Western Water

1300 650 425

www.westernwater.com.au

