

Frequently Asked Questions

Eligibility

Who is eligible to claim a rebate?

All residential customers connected to an urban reticulated water supply and who have an account with a Victorian urban water supplier.

Can a tenant of a property obtain a rebate for products under the rebate scheme?

Yes, if the tenant has a water account with one of the urban water businesses. Tenants that do not pay water bills will not be eligible for a rebate.

Are rural customers with water rights able to claim rebates?

No. The rebate scheme is only available to customers connected to a reticulated water supply of an urban water business.

Do pensioners and concession card holders get an extra discount?

No.

Do pensioners and concession card holders get assistance with the cost of a plumber?

No, but the Department of Human Services may be able to provide financial assistance under their "Smart Homes Program". For further information, please contact the Concession Unit on 1800 658 521.

I own more than one property. Can I claim a rebate for the purchase of water saving goods for each of the properties?

Yes. Rebates are claimed per household as they are taken off the cost of the property's next water bill.

General Questions

Are there any changes to the Water Smart Gardens and Homes Rebate Scheme from 1 July 2007?

Yes, while all the products and rebates that were in the scheme from 1 January 2007 are still available, one new "core offer" product has been added. It is a \$150 rebate for hot water recirculator. This device helps to save the cold water that would otherwise go to waste when the hot water tap is turned on.

Rebates for showerheads have also been extended to two per household. There are now two levels of rebates for the showerheads. A \$10 rebate is available for a showerhead costing between \$30 and \$100 or a \$20 rebate is available for showerheads costing over \$100.

Four new products have also been added to the basket of goods for the house and garden. These are:

- Rainwater diverter – to divert rainwater from a downpipe to the garden or pool.
- Waterless car cleaner – a spray or wipe on product to clean your car without the use of water.
- Shower timer – a timer to use in the shower to remind you to have short showers.
- Toilet flush interrupter device – to help save water in toilets by stopping the water flow once the flush button is released.

Who funds the rebate scheme?

The rebate scheme is funded by the Victorian Government's Department of Sustainability and Environment. Your local water business is responsible for processing the rebate application.

Is there a rebate scheme across Australia?

Some states are operating water saving rebate schemes but they are different to Victoria's. Please consult the relevant water authority for further information.

When does the rebate scheme end?


It has been extended for a further four years from 1 July, 2007.

Where can I go for more information?

Call 136 186 or your local water business.

Claiming a rebate

How do I get a rebate?

- By applying to your water supplier on a completed [rebate claim form](#) ( PDF - 132 Kb) and original receipt(s) that include full details of products purchased.
- You can obtain a form from your local hardware, plumbing supplies or garden retailer or from your local water authority's website.
- You can call the Department of Sustainability and Environment's customer service centre on 136 186

To claim a rebate for a rainwater tank and permanent greywater tank system (if the total cost of the product, materials and associated plumbing is greater than \$500) a Plumbing Industry Commission certificate for proof of installation is also required. You can ask your plumber for this certificate during the installation.

How will my rebate be paid?

The rebate for most products will be provided to you as a credit on your next water bill(s). If you do not get a rebate and have recently sent in your claim form, please wait until the next bill. However where a rebate is \$500 or more you may request payment by cheque or Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) by filling in the relevant details on the claim form – this includes rebates for the large rainwater tanks (\$500 to \$1000) and permanent greywater systems (\$500). These payments may take around 10-12 weeks to process.



What happens if I don't get a rebate and have sent my original receipt in with the claim form?

You should receive a letter from your water business indicating the outcome of your application. If you did not receive the letter, it means that the water business did not receive the claim.

If you are successful in your application but there is no rebate credited on your next water bill, you should call your local water business and have the details of your claim handy.

What if the rebate is more than my water bill?

If the rebate is more than your water bill, your account will remain in credit. Depending on your water bill, it may take several bills to receive the total rebate amount.

Is there a limit to the amount of rebates that can be claimed from any single store?

There is no store limit on rebates.

What's the minimum I can spend in order to claim a rebate?

The cheapest item in the scheme is a three-star water efficient showerhead, which can sell for around \$30 and provides a \$10 rebate.

How many rebates can I claim?

You can claim one rebate for each Core Product over the life of the scheme for each eligible property that you receive a water bill for (except for showerheads where two rebates can be claimed).

'Core products' include rainwater tanks, rainwater tank to toilet connection, large rainwater tank (including toilet and/or laundry connection), greywater systems, dual flush toilets and hot water recirculators.

For the basket of goods you can claim one rebate per calendar year for each eligible property.

When does the product need to be purchased and installed?

You must have purchased your products after 1 July 2007.

Applications for all rebates under the terms and conditions issued on 1 July 2007 must be submitted by 30 September 2009.

Products purchased prior to 1 July 2007 are still eligible for rebates set out in the terms and conditions in operation prior to 30 June 2007. Application for these rebates must be lodged by 30 September 2007.

Product Information

Why are high-pressure cleaning devices no longer eligible?

High pressure cleaning devices have been removed from the rebate program because they were found to save comparatively less water than other water-saving devices.

Who does water conservation home audits?

The audits are performed by independent organisations. There are many professional organisations that specialise in water efficiency that may perform the audits. You can also contact your local water business for more information.

Do lay-by goods qualify for the rebate?

Yes, however you can only claim a rebate once the full amount of the lay-by has been paid off and original receipt(s) of your purchase must be submitted with your rebate application.

I am building a new house and installing dual flush toilets. Can I claim a rebate?

No. The rebate only applies where an existing single flush toilet is being replaced by a dual flush toilet.

I am renovating my bathroom and replacing my single flush toilet with a dual flush toilet. Can I claim the rebate?

Yes, provided you have purchased the new toilet after 1 July, 2005.

What happens if I return a product for which I've already claimed a rebate?

You should advise your water business and the water business will reverse the rebate on your water bill.

Rainwater Tanks

Is there a rebate if I purchase a rainwater tank less than 2,000 litres in size?

The \$150 rebate under the Water Smart Gardens and Homes rebate scheme is available for 600 to 1999 litre rainwater tanks purchased and installed by a licensed plumber.

What if I buy a rainwater tank greater than 2,000 litres but only use it for my garden and do not have it plumbed to the house?

You will be eligible for the \$150 rebate under the Water Smart Gardens and Homes Rebate Scheme provided you are connected to reticulated (mains) water. Please refer to the terms and conditions to determine whether you are eligible.

Do I have to be connected to a reticulated water supply to be eligible for the rainwater tank rebate?

Yes. The rebate aims to help householders connected to a reticulated water supply to reduce the demand on public water supplies.

As a separate initiative the Government has provided assistance to pay for large tanks in drought-affected rural areas like the Wimmera.

How will my large tank rebate be paid?

Customers will have a choice of receiving the large tank rebates as a credit on their water bill, a cheque or a one-off Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT). Your choice of payment must be selected on the application form and the relevant details provided.

If I get six 1,000 litre tanks and connect them all to the toilet and laundry, do I get the \$1,000 rebate?

Yes. As long as the total capacity is greater than 5000 litres for the \$1,000 rebate and between 2,000 and 4,999 litres for the \$500 rebate. This gives people greater flexibility to choose tanks that suit their situation and the size of their property.

When do I need to use a plumber?

A licensed plumber must install all rainwater tanks, permanent greywater systems, hot water recirculators, dual-flush toilets and cisterns and tank to the toilet connections. Where required, a Plumbing Industry Commission (PIC) certificate must be supplied.

The installation must also meet any relevant building code requirements and have the necessary council permit (where required). A council septic tank permit may also be required for greywater systems. See terms and conditions for full details.

What is a PIC certificate?

A PIC certificate is a Plumbing Industry Commission certificate of compliance that is supplied by a licensed plumber. A PIC certificate must be included with the rebate application if the total cost of the product, materials and associated plumbing is greater than \$500. Ask your plumber to supply you with a PIC certificate on completion of works. For more information visit www.pic.vic.gov.au

The rainwater tank or rainwater tank to toilet rebate is only available to new houses that received a building permit for the house before 30 June 2005. Proof of the building permit issue date is required.

Can I connect the tank to the toilet/laundry myself?

No. You must use a licensed plumber. You will be asked to provide the original tank receipt, plumber's receipt or Plumbing Industry Certificate with your rebate application form.

Can I get my tank plumbing costs reimbursed?

The rebate is to help with the total costs of both purchasing and installing the tank and having it connected to your toilet and/or laundry by a licensed plumber.

I have already installed a 5,000 litre rainwater tank and received a \$150 rebate. Can I now apply for the difference up to \$900 or \$1,000?

No, the program is not retrospective. The large tank (including toilet and / or laundry connection) rebate is for tanks purchased and installed on or after 1 January 2007.

Can I claim the tank rebate for a newly built house?




No. The tank rebates are not available to new houses that received a building permit after 30 June 2005.

If I receive a rebate to install a rainwater tank, will I be charged a water supply fee?

No. The Government has no plans to introduce a water supply fee for rainwater or water collected in tanks.

Where a planning permit is required from your local Council, there may be a fee associated with obtaining this permit. Please contact your local Council to find out whether this is the case.

I already have a water tank installed. If I connect this to my toilet, how much can I claim?

You can claim a \$150 rebate for the toilet connection provided that you meet all the terms and conditions. The [rebate claim form](#) ( PDF - 132 Kb) includes information on terms and conditions.