

Water

ACT Labor has made massive investments in securing the ACT's water supply and protecting our water catchment areas.

In this time of unpredictable weather patterns, and in the midst of a prolonged drought, the ACT Labor Government has made the tough decisions to ensure Canberra's water supply remains secure, now and for the future.

We have implemented the *Think Water Act Water* strategy which has led to a 20% reduction in water consumption since 2002.

To diversify and secure the ACT's water supply we have started pumping from the Murrumbidgee River and will transfer water from the Cotter Dam to the Googong reservoir. We've also invested in the nation's largest ultraviolet disinfection facility, at the Mt Stromlo Water Treatment Plant.

In partnership with the Commonwealth, we are creating urban ponds to capture storm water and reuse it for irrigation. Hundreds of our public housing tenants have had their homes retrofitted with dual-flush toilets, water-saving showerheads and flow regulators.

ACT Labor is helping Canberrans do their bit to save water. We have given away 10,000 grey water hoses so households can reduce their use of potable water by running their rinse-cycle of the washing machine onto the garden. We offer rebates on rainwater tanks with an internal plumbing connections and we provide a \$100 dual-flush toilet rebate that is saving average households about 36,600 litres of water a year. We have also introduced a free GardenSmart service where qualified horticulturalists give advice to Canberrans on water-saving techniques for their gardens.

ACT Labor has been able to do all of this – and has done much more – because we have been good economic managers and have maintained strong budget surpluses so we can invest in Canberra's water security. We will continue to develop programs and initiatives that help our community save water, maintain water catchment quality and invest in water infrastructure for the future.

Jon Stanhope
Chief Minister and
Minister for the Environment,
Water and Climate Change

Katy Gallagher
Deputy Chief Minister

A Proud Record of Investment in Water Security

The ACT Labor Government has invested massively in new water infrastructure to diversify our supply options.

We have also provided the Canberra community with support and incentives so we can each do our bit to save this precious natural resource.

Our Record

The ACT Labor Government has:

- Implemented the *Think Water Act Water* strategy — a suite of supply and demand measures that has led to a 20% reduction in water consumption since 2002;
- Introduced permanent water conservation measures;
- Supported investment in major water infrastructure projects to secure Canberra's water supply;
- Achieved full membership of the Murray Darling Basin Commission, giving the ACT an equal seat at the table for the first time in the Commission's history;
- Negotiated a water cap for the ACT that allows for and will accommodate population growth into the future;
- Diversified Canberra's water supply by pumping water from the Murrumbidgee River;
- Further diversified supply by pumping water from the small Cotter Dam for storage in the much larger Googong reservoir. This work has re-instated the Cotter as a vital part of Canberra's urban water supply;
- Increased the pumping capacity of the Cotter Pumping Station and the Murrumbidgee Pumping Station;
- Upgraded the Googong Water Treatment Plant;
- Ensured that local businesses that depend on outdoor water use have access to free recycled water from the Lower Molonglo Plant;
- Invested in the nation's largest ultraviolet disinfection facility at the Mt Stromlo Water Treatment Plant;
- Created urban ponds to capture and reuse for irrigation, storm water that once would have flowed down drains, in partnership with the Commonwealth;
- Engaged in extensive community consultation on the Territory's future water options;
- Given away 10,000 grey water hoses to households so they can reduce their use of potable water;
- Secured a pledge of \$85 million from the Commonwealth for a scheme to reduce the salt levels on treated waste water sent downstream from our treatment plants;
- Introduced a free GardenSmart service to give Canberrans access to a qualified horticulturist to assess domestic gardens and advise on water-saving techniques;

- Provided \$100 dual-flush toilet rebates, which are seeing savings in average households about 36,600 litres of water a year;
- Provided rebates on rainwater tanks with internal plumbing connections;
- Invested in moveable roadside electronic signs to show Canberrans our daily water use and dam levels;
- Helped sporting organisations adapt to climate change through the \$16 million 'Where Will We Play' program, with projects including stormwater harvesting, artificial playing surfaces and the installation of lights to allow greater use of popular grounds;
- Retrofitted hundreds of ACT Housing properties with dual-flush toilets, water-saving showerheads and flow regulators;
- Installed water-saving COMTROL irrigation systems in schools (reducing water use by 40%) and upgrades of existing irrigation systems; and
- Introduced a policy of having no ovals dependent entirely on potable water by 2013.

Moving Forward

Salt reduction

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will work with the Commonwealth to determine the best approach to reducing the concentration of salt in the water discharged downstream from Canberra's water treatment facilities. The Commonwealth has pledged \$85 million for this work.

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will also help Canberrans to reduce the increasing salinity of the water that flows out of the ACT. \$460,000 will be provided over the next term to promote the benefits of choosing products, such as shampoos and washing detergents, that are low in salts and other measures to reduce salt levels.

Water tank rebates

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will provide \$470,000 to extend our existing water tank rebate scheme to apply to new tanks with or without an internal plumbing connection.

The rebate will be higher for tanks with an internal connection and separate rebates are available to connect existing tanks to internal plumbing.

The new rebates of \$150 will apply to new tanks with a capacity of 2000 litres and above with no external connection.

Grey water hoses

In Stage 1 of the grey water hose program the ACT Labor Government gave away 10,000 grey water hoses to households wanting to reuse grey water from their washing machines.

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will start Stage 2 of this program at a cost of \$250,000 to allow even more households to divert their washing machine rinse water to the garden.

Water efficient washing machines

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will provide \$1.5 million to introduce a new rebate to Canberrans who purchase a 4.5 star or above water efficient washing machine for domestic use. \$150 rebates will be available on 4.5 star WELS-rated washing machines and \$200 rebates for 5 star and above.

Helping business to save water

It is important that businesses are prepared for the increasing effects of climate change. A re-elected ACT Labor Government will provide \$600,000 million to support water audits and water management plans, undertake business continuity planning and support businesses to implement key water saving measures.

Murray-Darling River

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will continue to work collaboratively and cooperatively with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) to ensure flows in the Murray Darling Basin are sufficient to preserve the communities and ecosystems that rely on the river system.

Cotter Dam enlargement

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will continue to support the project to enlarge the Cotter Dam from 4 gegalitres to 78 gegalitres. This single strategy will increase the water storage capacity of the ACT by about a third. Work on the dam enlargement is expected to be completed within three to five years.

Murrumbidgee-to-Googong

A re-elected ACT Labor Government will continue to support the project to install pumping and piping infrastructure to increase the volume of water transferred from the Murrumbidgee River to the Googong Dam.

Water trading

A re-elected ACT Labor Government continue to support the project to explore the feasibility of purchasing water, at an estimated cost of about \$38 million, from downstream irrigators, to store in Tantangara Dam, in NSW, until it is needed.

Demonstration water purification plant

In the wake of intensive community consultation, a re-elected ACT Labor Government will complete the design of a demonstration Water Purification Plant.