

savewater!awards®

Celebrating Sustainable Water Use

Office of the Hawkesbury-Nepean

Winner

Government

for outstanding innovation and
achievement in water efficiency

2012

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City West Water



An initiative of the savewater! Alliance

Government

This award acknowledges achievement and a strong ongoing commitment by a local authority, state or federal government agency/department, to reducing its own or the community's water use. This category also includes government owned businesses and utilities.

Congratulations to our winner, The Office of the Hawkesbury-Nepean.

Winner – The Office of the Hawkesbury-Nepean

The Office of the Hawkesbury-Nepean was a NSW Government initiative to improve the health of the Hawkesbury-Nepean river system, which supplies over 80% of Sydney's total water consumption.

The Office achieved significant water savings through the Hawkesbury-Nepean River Recovery Program.

The program was funded by the Australian Government through its Water for the Future initiative and was managed in conjunction with other NSW agencies, including the Department of Primary Industries, the Hawkesbury-Nepean Catchment Management Authority, the Office of Water, Sydney Water Corporation, the Office of Environment and Heritage and Hawkesbury City Council. It comprised seven major projects, including:

1. Improving water balance accounting with new and upgraded metering systems for licensed water users;
2. Purchasing water licences from 77 willing sellers to increase the amount of water that stays in the river system for the environment;
3. Improving water-use efficiency through licence holder education, irrigation system upgrades and water harvesting and re-use;
4. Improving irrigation and landscape efficiency at 132 non-agricultural sites across greater Sydney;
5. Constructing a recycled water facility and distribution system at the South Windsor Sewage Treatment Plant;
6. Reducing nutrient run-off from agricultural activities through landholder education and on-farm system improvements; and
7. Monitoring nutrient exports in the catchment to measure the effectiveness of nutrient-management methods and identify areas for future investment.

Overall, this \$77.4 million program saved an estimated 12.4 gigalitres of water per year, of which 1.4 gigalitres was potable water. Nutrient input into the river system was also reduced by at least 77.1 tonnes per year (61.8 tonnes of nitrogen and 15.3 tonnes of phosphorus).

Maree Abood, Director at the Office of the Hawkesbury- Nepean is greatly honoured at being selected as a finalist in the government category of the 2012 savewater! awards® for the Australian Government-funded Hawkesbury-Nepean River Recovery Program.

"The program was a collaborative effort between government agencies, local government and landholders and leaves a valuable legacy for the Hawkesbury-Nepean catchment. Being named as a savewater! awards® finalist will help to ensure its successes have a lasting impact in the catchment community as well as on future water savings initiatives nationwide", says Ms Abood.

Judges' comments

The Office of Hawkesbury-Nepean has instituted seven comprehensive projects aimed to improve river health. This is achieved by reducing demand through water-efficiency, reducing nutrient exports and by making more water available for the environment. The recovery program achieved an estimated 12,433 million litres per year of secured, unsecured and irrigator water savings, exceeding its objectives by 7.3 per cent.

