



# **Bristol Water Plc**

# **Water Efficiency Strategy**

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# Water Efficiency Strategy

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## Section 1. General Approach

Bristol Water will continue to pursue an efficiency strategy based on customer education and awareness, together with incentives to both household and business customers, to be efficient in their use of water.

The success of Bristol Water's Water Efficiency Strategy has been shown in the results of a past study, 'The Customer Perspective' instigated by an industry quadripartite group including Ofwat, The Environment Agency, DEFRA and Water UK undertaken by WaterVoice. Customers participating in the study viewed Bristol Water's water efficiency advice to household and non-household customers as 'good'. When questioned on the industry as a whole, they highlighted activities that were considered as 'good practice', many of which are undertaken by Bristol Water such as:

- An annual newsletter 'Watertalk'
- Information on free metering, water saving tips, and LeakStop sent with bills
- Provision of leaflet pro-forma for self-audit of water use
- Information on water saving devices and leak detection
- Visiting business customers to advise on water efficiency

The study results particularly highlighted the benefits of educating people of school age about the value of water, and the need for sensible water use at home and in the work place. Bristol Water will continue to maintain a focus on school visits and provision of educational material as a core part of its efficiency strategy.

To communicate the importance of water, the Company maintains a visitor centre that is open to the public on Sundays throughout the summer. This facility contains historic and educational displays, and a permanent exhibition of water saving devices. Schools or other interested parties may enjoy the use of this facility at any time.

BusinessCare continues to promote good water management to major industrial and business customers by providing monthly, and real-time consumption data, offering audit services and free advice. Through BusinessCare, the Company contributes to national initiatives such as 'Watermark', and the Water in Schools website. The latter aims to encourage educational establishments to monitor and reduce their water consumption.

The Company's strategy is to inform and provide access to water efficient devices and advice to all customers, in order to maintain a strong, consistent message.

## Section 2. Public Education

This year we will provide all customers with access to advice on water efficiency, building on information given in previous years. Information will be provided in the form of the annual newsletter 'Watertalk' distributed via the local press to approximately 90,000 customers. In addition, we will provide a compact version of 'Watertalk' to all customers with their water bill. These publications will include a self-audit pro-forma 'Are You a Water Wizard'. There will also be advice on improving aspects of water efficiency, such as:

- The 'Have you got the Bottle?' campaign to install water saving cistern devices
- Information and advice on conserving water around the home
- Gardening tips to save water
- Sale of garden water saving devices at discounted prices
- List of open days at the water saving garden and at the Blagdon Visitor Centre
- Advice on how to get a free water meter and its benefits
- A freephone number to report leakage
- Information on obtaining free leak repairs through the 'Leakstop' scheme

In addition to regularly distributed material, the Company provides additional published pamphlets:

- 'The Secret Garden' – an explanation of the techniques employed in the Company's award winning water saving garden.
- 'The Garden Year in the West' – advice on water efficient gardening throughout the year
- 'Are You a Water Wizard' – advice on auditing household water use

All of this material is also accessible on the Bristol Water Web site, which undergoes continuous updating and development. The site is also supported by availability of educational CD ROMS. In 2003-04, the redesigned Bristol Water website received over 40,000 visits. Focus has been increased on education and schools, including the design, production and launch of the 'www.waterintheschools.co.uk' website.

Bristol Water constantly re-assesses the availability of water resources throughout the year. Depending upon the situation, regular public information will be communicated as events require in order to achieve the maximum impact on the public consumption of water at critical times of year. This may include direct advertising in the press, on vehicles or on hoardings. In addition, all opportunities for 'Advertorial' and editorial work in the local press and broadcast media will be utilised.

Bristol Water intends to maintain sponsorship for the weather forecast section within the Bristol Evening Post. This allows the Company to include a brief message relevant to conditions. For example, 'If showers are forecast, no need to water the garden', or simply 'use water wisely' if we are not in a dry period.

This regular contact keeps the 'Use Water Wisely' message to the fore. (last year this approach was instrumental in helping to maintain demand at relatively low levels during one of the hottest summers on record).

## Section 3. Public Events

Bristol Water plans to expand its broad based public education strategy, to include a wide range of activities during the year. These events are run and supported by Bristol Water staff, who will be on hand to advise and inform customers.

- ‘Lazy Sunday afternoons’, free open days throughout summer at Blagdon Visitor Centre featuring a Water Efficiency Room and a series of exhibitions on water and the history and workings of Bristol Water.
- Headline events such as Blagdon Country Fayre, Blagdon Birthday Bash and Chew Environment Day, where garden water saving methods, advice on water efficiency, cistern devices, and water audit information were made available.
- A comprehensive educational programme centred around Blagdon Visitor Centre, comprising talks and tours. (154 free events organised in the previous year).
- A programme of educational school visits will be made in line with previous years. Educational material is provided on all aspects of the water cycle including the need for responsible water use.
- We maintain a comprehensive and detailed Company Web site, with information on all aspects of water efficiency, including water self audits, effective use of water in the garden, how to obtain water saving devices, advice on metering, and a metering consumption ready-reckoner. The Web site receives over 4000 visits per month.
- Open days to feature the Company water saving garden, explaining the techniques used and the types of plant available to promote low water consumption.

The Company’s public education strategy is aimed at promoting water efficiency to all customers. Certain sectors however will be specifically targeted at these events.

**Schoolchildren;** by educating and promoting awareness in children from a young age, we believe we will aid the development of a more water conscious customer base.

**Gardeners;** as potential high users, the Company uses a wide ranging approach to gardeners providing information of interest on gardening, incorporating advice and offers on water saving devices and environmentally friendly techniques, such as composting.

## **Section 4. Action to Reduce Demand for Water**

### **Leakage Reduction**

The Company is committed to pursuing an active leakage control policy, involving pressure reduction, district metering and regular sounding to detect underground leaks. By use of the latest technology, and a system of continuous review, Bristol Water has consistently held leakage below the target level in the past. The Company intends to maintain this position in future years.

### **Leakstop**

Under the LeakStop scheme Bristol Water encourages household customers to report any leakage on their supply pipes. This scheme is advertised through all printed material and on the Company Web site. When reported, through this scheme, the Company will repair, free of charge the external underground supply pipes owned by household customers. Based on the audited results of previous years, the amount of water saved would be in excess of 600,000 litres per day.

### **Metering**

As stated, Bristol Water will provide a free water meter to customers that wish to change their tariff to a metered supply. During the next five years, we would expect to supply approximately 4000 household customers per annum with a meter on request. All newly built properties are automatically placed on a metered supply.

The Company is completing a process of approaching all customers paying additional charges for sprinklers. These customers will be required to take a metered supply, or agree to cease using their sprinkler.

The Company has extended its programme of compulsory metering for the remaining few non-household, un-metered customers. We will identify what we believe to be larger water consumers in this group and install a water meter. The Company has forecast it will make 400 compulsory meter installations per annum over the next five years for this group of customers.

### **Cistern Devices**

The Company promotes the use of a simple plastic bottle as a cistern efficiency device through the established campaign 'Have you got the bottle?' This campaign is promoted throughout the year, and given extra prominence during summer. At the Blagdon Visitor Centre and other open days, staff can advise with the help of a display, how to select and install a device.

At these events laboratory water sample bottles which would otherwise have been disposed of are now recycled as cistern devices given free to customers with an instruction leaflet on installation. Hippos with advice printed on them are also made available.

Based on research evidence of 4.2 flushes per person per day, and a Company occupancy rate of 2.5 people per property, the potential water saving for an average household is approximately 60 litres per day with a 1litre device installed.

### **Other Water Saving Devices**

The Company continues to subsidise and promote a range of water saving devices for use around the house and particularly in the garden. These are always available at all open days and directly through advertising in 'Water Talk' or via the Web site.

### **Household Water Audits**

In line with Ofwat good practice, the availability of self-audit packs is referred to in all literature and the packs are freely distributed at all Company open days, school visits and other events. Overall attendance at these events has averaged 7000 individuals in previous years.

In addition, a self-water audit pro-forma is available on the Bristol Water's web site, which also has an interactive online water audit calculator and provides tips on good water management.

## **Section 5. Commercial Customers, Schools and Hospitals**

### **Commercial Customers**

The Company has a designated BusinessCare department, whose objective is to provide assistance and advice on efficient and cost-effective water management for businesses and institutions.

Water efficiency is promoted for the major user customers by an annual visit from the BusinessCare Manager to assess their water utilisation, when:

- A limited water audit and leak detection service are offered free of charge
- Treatment and recycling is encouraged where water is used for cooling or rinsing
- Recovery and treatment of surface water is investigated.
- Water saving devices such as spray taps and automatic flushes are promoted.
- Advice is given on self audits

Each month, the major customers are sent a water consumption report including comparative data and a graph. This facilitates good water management and allows for any consumption discrepancies to be identified quickly and investigated.

BusinessCare is also promoted generally by ongoing customer contact, leaflets and through a separately identified area on the Bristol Water web site. Once per year, the BusinessCare newsletter 'Inflow' is sent to all commercial and institutional customers. This offers:

- A self-audit package and focuses on improvement in water utilisation
- News on changes in regulations
- 'Efficient Water Management for Business' booklet
- Water Bye-Laws self assessment advice

For the largest water users, the Company is trialing the use of modem linked flow loggers communicating directly to the manufacturers Web site. This will allow business' that have this equipment installed to monitor their consumption at any time. The intention is that this enabling technology will allow these customers to pick up occurrences of unusual demand and possible waste, or observe the benefits of any efficiency measures adopted. The customers with this equipment installed are:

Sevalco  
Seabank Power  
Terra Nitrogen  
Bristol University (tower)  
Essilor  
Bristol Royal Infirmary (2 sites)

If successful, this scheme will be offered to additional customers in future years.

This year, Bristol Water are working with Zenneca and the University of Bristol on project to reduce consumption in specific areas of their business targeted as having high water consumption.

We are also in discussion with the larger industrial and commercial customers regarding participation in the Water Management Awards in 2005/06. This is a national award scheme, co-sponsored by the Environment Agency to reward particularly good water efficiency schemes. We look forward to our commercial customers taking up the challenge, and present their efficiency projects next year.

### **Water in Schools**

The Company is a sponsor and partner in this collaborative web site project, 'www.waterintheschools.co.uk', which provides advice and information on water conservation, both for school management and for its pupils. The strategy continues with its increased focus on education and schools. The aims of the site are to:

- Encourage schools to monitor their water use
- Introduce changes that will conserve water and so save money
- Foster responsible attitudes to water use in the pupils
- Encourage the pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding to global water and environmental issues

The site consists of curriculum based lesson plans and educational documentation for teachers to download for use in the class room, school case studies, software to enter and analyse water meter readings which then can be related to maths lessons and links to other environmental web sites.

The Company also prepares an extensive education pack targeted especially at children of primary school age. Copies of this pack are always made freely available on request to schools, or to pupils engaging in school projects. In addition, these packs are also distributed at any educational visit carried out by Bristol Water staff, whether at the Blagdon visitor centre or at local schools.

### **Watermark**

The Water UK Water Efficiency Group, of which Bristol Water is a member, has produced a draft leaflet for hospitals and the NHS that includes new benchmarks for water use and best practice. This will publicise the opportunity for water saving initiatives, provide guidance and case studies to support hospitals in implementing water saving measures.

In the future Bristol Water will be contacting other public sector establishments to discuss ways in which the Company can offer help and advice to reduce their water bills and to apply best practice in water management.