

WATER — GROUNDWATER — ALLOCATION

1304. Hon Martin Aldridge to the parliamentary secretary representing the Minister for Water:

- (1) I refer to the media statement of the former Minister for Water on 3 June 2022 entitled ‘Plan to rebalance precious groundwater resources released’, and I ask:
  - (a) will the Minister please detail the water users or classes of users that will be impacted by the water allocation reduction;
  - (b) for each identified in (a), will the Minister please identify the reduction of water allocation that will be applied;
  - (c) will the Minister please identify water users or classes of users that will be exempt from reduced water allocations;
  - (d) will the Minister please breakdown the \$11.5 million support package and the source of funding for each element of the package; and
  - (e) of the \$11.5 million support package, how much has been expended to date?
- (2) I refer to the \$1.5 million allocated to assist eligible commercial Western Australian horticultural businesses and I ask how many applications have been approved to date and what proportion of funds have been disbursed to date?

**Hon Pierre Yang replied:**

- (1) (a)–(b) The water users or classes of users that will be impacted by the water allocation reductions are outlined in Chapter 5 of the publicly available Department of Water and Environmental Regulation’s 2022 *Gnangara groundwater allocation plan*. The abstraction reductions in the *Gnangara groundwater allocation plan* will be shared across Gnangara groundwater users. For most licensed users this will be a 10 per cent reduction from 2028. The reduction for public water supply will be 27 per cent.

The change in the garden bore sprinkler roster from three to two days per week to align it with the scheme water roster from 1 September 2022, applies to ‘Area 3’ under the Water Agencies (Water Use) By-laws 2010 which includes Perth and Mandurah.
- (c) The water users or classes of users that will be exempt from reduced water allocations are outlined in Section 3.2.1 and are also explained in Section 4.5 and Chapter 5 of the *Gnangara groundwater allocation plan*.

Households with a garden bore in the Perth and Mandurah area can seek an exemption from the two-days-per-week sprinkler roster if they do not have access to scheme water and are located in a Department of Fire and Emergency Services identified bushfire prone area.

Applications can continue to be made for a temporary exclusion from sprinkler restrictions for the irrigation of new lawns and gardens while they are being established.
- (d) \$1 million to support agricultural licensees within the Gnangara plan area (in addition to \$600,000 previously committed to support agricultural licensees in North Wanneroo). This funding is from the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation, and is administered through the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development’s Gnangara Horticultural Water Use Efficiency Grants Program.

\$4 million to support local governments within the Gnangara plan area. This funding is from the Water Corporation.

\$6.5 million to assist households in Perth and Mandurah with making their gardens more water efficient. This includes rebates on smart irrigation technology, spring sprinkler system check-ups and waterwise workshops. The funding is from the Water Corporation.
- (e) Under the Gnangara Horticultural Water Use Efficiency Grants Program (which is inclusive of North Wanneroo), \$147,930 has been committed through approved water efficiency grants and vouchers. Of that, \$53,800 has been disbursed (see further detail in answer 2 below). The program will close on 30 June 2024, or when funds are fully committed.

Grant applications to support eligible local governments within the Gnangara plan area are currently open. It is anticipated that initial grant payments to recipients will occur in July 2023, with final payments to be made in 2026.

At 22 March 2023, Water Corporation has expended more than \$1.1 million of the \$6.5 million committed to deliver rebates on smart irrigation technology, sprinkler system improvements, garden audits and waterwise workshops. Many of these initiatives are ongoing and further funds are expected to be spent for this and in subsequent financial years.

- (2) Total number of water use efficiency grants approved – six  
Total number of water use efficiency vouchers approved – two  
Combined value of grants and vouchers – \$147,930  
Amounts disbursed to date – \$53,800