



Is it time for a water tank?

Be more water resilient, increase water storage at your home

Weather patterns are changing and we are experiencing longer dry spells and shorter bursts of intense rainfall. It is beneficial for all households to increase their water storage whether they are dependent on tank water or connected to the municipal supply. Installing a rain tank allows you to collect and store water from your roof top and use it when required.

Stored rainwater can be used in the home for:

- outdoor uses like **car washing** and **watering the garden**
- indoor non-potable uses like **toilet flushing** or the **washing machine**
- with the correct filters and plumbing, **showers** and **drinking water**.

Depending on how you want to use the collected water, you may require a building or resource consent from council and to hire a registered plumber to install and connect the tank. To find out if a consent is required, visit www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz and use the 'Do I need a consent tool?' for rainwater tanks.



Did you know?

All water supplied by Watercare has been treated to grade A++ drinking standards which is great for our health, but in times of drought when demand increases, treatment plants have to work a lot harder to process the water that in many cases is being used to flush a toilet or wash the car. A rainwater tank could be used instead, reducing pressure on the municipal water supply and increasing household water resilience.

Water requirements for rural homes

Typically, for households who are solely dependent on water tanks, on-site storage is around 25,000 litres. With the increasing number of dry days and only short rain showers to top up the tank, for most families this may not provide enough water in times of drought and it will be necessary to plan ahead to order water deliveries, or consider installing an additional tank.

The table below shows how much water would be needed over a two month period for varying household sizes.

Daily water use (180 litres) per person for two months (60 days)						
People in household	1	2	3	4	5	6
Tank size required (Litres)	10,800	21,600	32,400	43,200	54,000	64,800

For 3+ bedroom houses or those larger than 100sqm that are not connected to the municipal water supply we recommend having a minimum of 30-50,000 litres of water storage. Additional water would be required for properties with animals to care for, substantial irrigation needs and for fire fighting.

Water companies offer a very useful service for those that run out of water and cannot store enough on site, but for properties that have the space, then additional water storage is highly recommended.

What is my water use made up of?

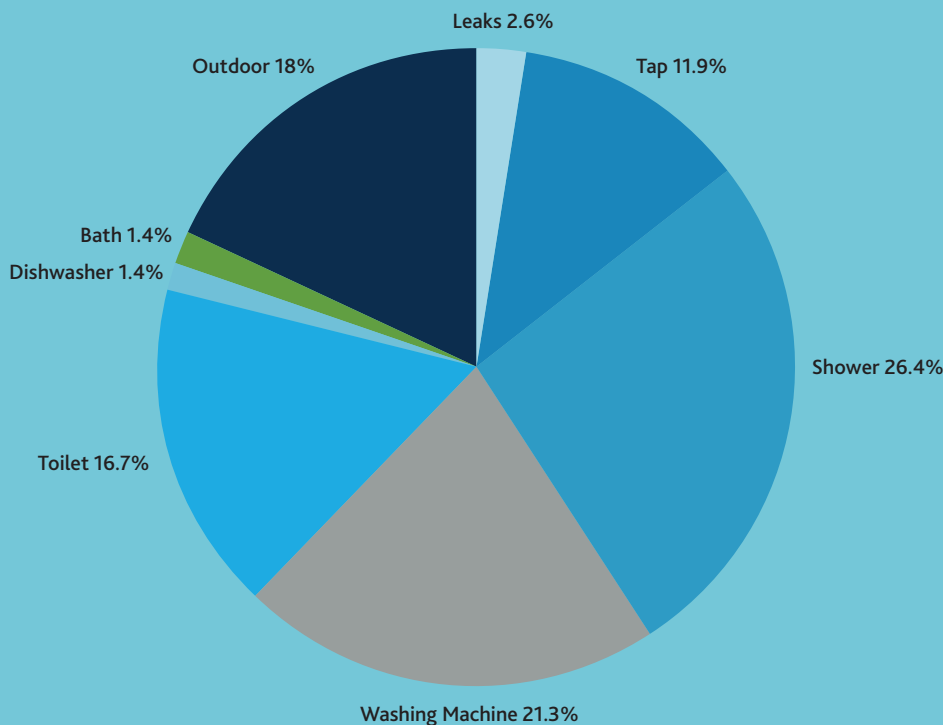
According to a study by BRANZ* the average household uses approximately 180 litres of water per person per day. This includes showers, toilet flushing, drinking and outdoor use. Water used for toilet flushing and washing machine use is very similar all year round, however water demands for outdoor use generally increase over the summer period.

*BRANZ – Study Report No. 159 (2007) Water End Use and Efficiency Project (WEEP) -Final Report



Household water use during summer months

Reference: Auckland Water Use Study, BRANZ and Watercare



Dish

I’m connected to the central water network, should I get a water tank?

In areas connected to the piped network it is not necessary to have a water tank for drinking water. However, on average, approximately 50% of all household water is for non-potable (non-drinking) uses and could be supplied by water collected from your rooftop. This would reduce pressure on the water network in dry periods as well as helping the environment by reducing the amount of runoff going into the drains. It is also an opportunity to increase your household’s water resilience, by having a back-up supply should there ever be an emergency.

The location and size of a tank will need to be considered in urban areas where space is limited. Slimline tanks or small garden water butts are a good option for outdoor use, however for indoor non-potable use, a minimum of 2,000 litres storage is a good place to start.

Rainwater tanks for urban non-potable use

House roof size	100m2	120m2	170m2	200m2	250m2
Number of people in household	1 person	2 people	3 people	4 people	5 people
Estimated tank size to supply toilet, washing machine and outdoor use					
Litres	2,000L	3,500L	5,500L	5,500L	10,000L

The above table is adapted from the “BRANZ, Valuing Sustainability #2” (November 2016) report. It assumes average water usage is 180 L per person of which about 58% can be supplied by rainwater for use in toilets, washer and outdoors. Tank size allows for the expected summer rainfall in the region. For a small amount of outdoor use, you may find a rain barrel or a small tank useful. Simple barrels start at 200 litres.

Can I drink from my rainwater tank in an emergency?

While it is not recommended to drink collected water in places where there is a treated town supply, a rainwater tank could be a back up in the event of a water supply emergency. Precautions must be taken to ensure emergency non-potable water is safe for drinking. For more information visit www.health.govt.nz, and follow the Ministry of Health drinking water guidelines about drinking unfiltered/untreated water in times of emergency.

If you choose to use your tank for drinking water, either for everyday use or in an emergency, it is your responsibility to keep your water safe and reduce the risk of water-borne illness from contaminated tank water. More information to keep your tank water safe from contaminants can be found on the Health Ed website www.healthed.govt.nz, using their 'Water collection tanks and safe household water' guide.

Tips: Get the most from your water tank and don't run out of water

- check your tank's water level regularly
- consider adding a smart meter app to your water tank
- re-use household water in the garden
- consider installing water efficiency fittings to showers, taps and toilets
- if you are dependent on tank water consider booking water deliveries early or increasing your water storage capacity with an additional tank.

Visit www.watercare.co.nz/Help-and-advice/Be-Waterwise for more ideas on how to be waterwise in your home.

Make the most of the wetter months and install a water tank now

Auckland Council has removed resource consent fees to install a new rainwater tank at residential properties. For more information about installing a rainwater tank at your home, including the building and resource consent process visit www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz and search 'rainwater tanks' or contact our Healthy Waters rainwater tank guidance service to see if you are eligible: hwrainwatertank@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz