

SUSTAINABLE LANDSCAPING FOR WATER CONSERVATION

Presented by Marion Cahill

Water conservation is becoming increasingly important to West Australians. Local Governments are one of the greatest users of water in their daily activities, particularly in the maintenance of council managed parks and gardens. Many local governments are exploring alternatives to their high water use activities.

The sustainable Landscaping Strategy: Using Local Plants for Water Conservation and Nutrient Reduction (2005) has been developed by the North Metro Catchment Group, in conjunction with the Eastern Metropolitan Regional Council and Claise Brook Catchment Group. The Strategy focuses on opportunities for local Governments to use local native plants in a range of landscaping environs within their area of management, providing details on a number of activities the Local Governments can implement. Some of these include educational brochures, demonstration gardens, plants to residents schemes.

The Strategy also aims to raise community awareness about the use of local native plants, with the following objectives:

- Facilitate community behaviour change towards increased use of local plants
- Change community perception of local plants and their use in landscaping

The Strategy was distributed to 31 Local Governments within the Swan NRM Region in February 2006. It was successfully piloted with the Cities of Swan and Gosnells, and the Town of Vincent, who implemented various components of the Strategy. Many urban councils have also implemented components of the Strategy, particularly the production of the Sustainable Landscaping brochures.

The Strategy links to a number of other programs used by Local Governments, including the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) Water Campaign, Water Corporation Waterwise Schools Program and Swan River Trust initiatives.

For further information about the Using Local Plants Strategy, please contact the North Metro Catchment Group on 9271 7922