

## FACT SHEET

### RAINWATER USE

South East Queensland is experiencing the worst drought on record and our dam levels are at historic lows. While rainwater tanks will be important in addressing the short-term water balance during the drought, they are also an important element in supplementing our current water supplies to ensure a sustainable water supply into the future.

#### What can you use rainwater for?

More and more households and industries in urban areas are realising what many people in rural areas have known for a long time – that rainwater tanks can provide a renewable supply of natural, soft, clear and odourless water.

Rainwater can be used for washing cars and other objects, bathing, cleaning, animal husbandry, flushing toilets, topping up pools and ponds, in the laundry and for gardening.

#### How do water restrictions apply to rainwater tanks?

If your tank is not connected to the town/mains water supply you can use the rainwater for any purpose at any time (even when water restrictions are in place). However, if your tank is empty and you fill it from the town/mains water supply, or have a carrier deliver water from a town/mains water supply, you must comply with any prevailing water restrictions, as the water has been obtained directly or indirectly (via the carrier) from within a local council reticulated water system.

All water from a rainwater tank will be subject to restrictions if the rainwater tank makes use of a trickle top-up system (see figure 1 on next page) to maintain supply for internal uses such as the toilet and the washing machine. However, if a tank makes use of an automatic switching valve to maintain supply for internal uses (see figure 2 on next page), water from the tank is not subject to restriction so long as it is taken from upstream of the automatic switching valve.

#### Queensland Government rebates to help you

The Home WaterWise Rebate Scheme helps with the purchase of rainwater tanks. Some local Governments also provide rebates: [www.nrw.qld.gov.au/water/saverscheme/index.html](http://www.nrw.qld.gov.au/water/saverscheme/index.html)

#### Want to know more?

[www.water.qld.gov.au](http://www.water.qld.gov.au)

[www.lgp.qld.gov.au/?id=4174](http://www.lgp.qld.gov.au/?id=4174)

[www.qwc.qld.gov.au](http://www.qwc.qld.gov.au) or call 1300 789 906

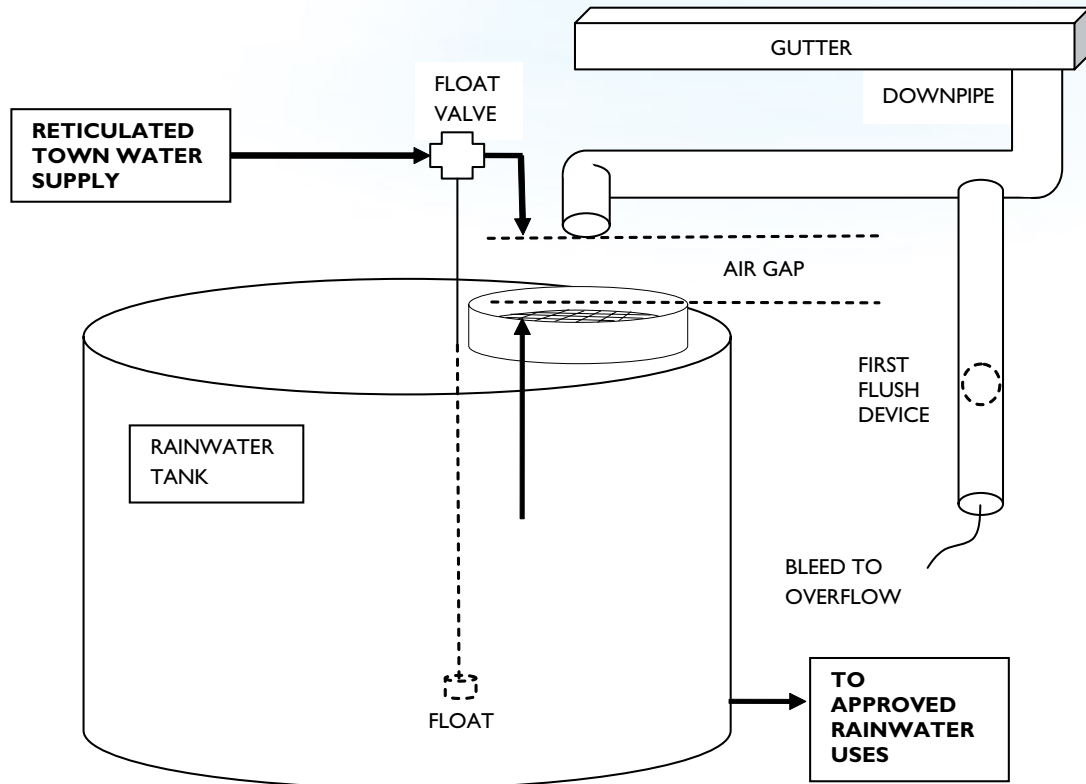


Figure 1. Rainwater tank using a trickle top up system

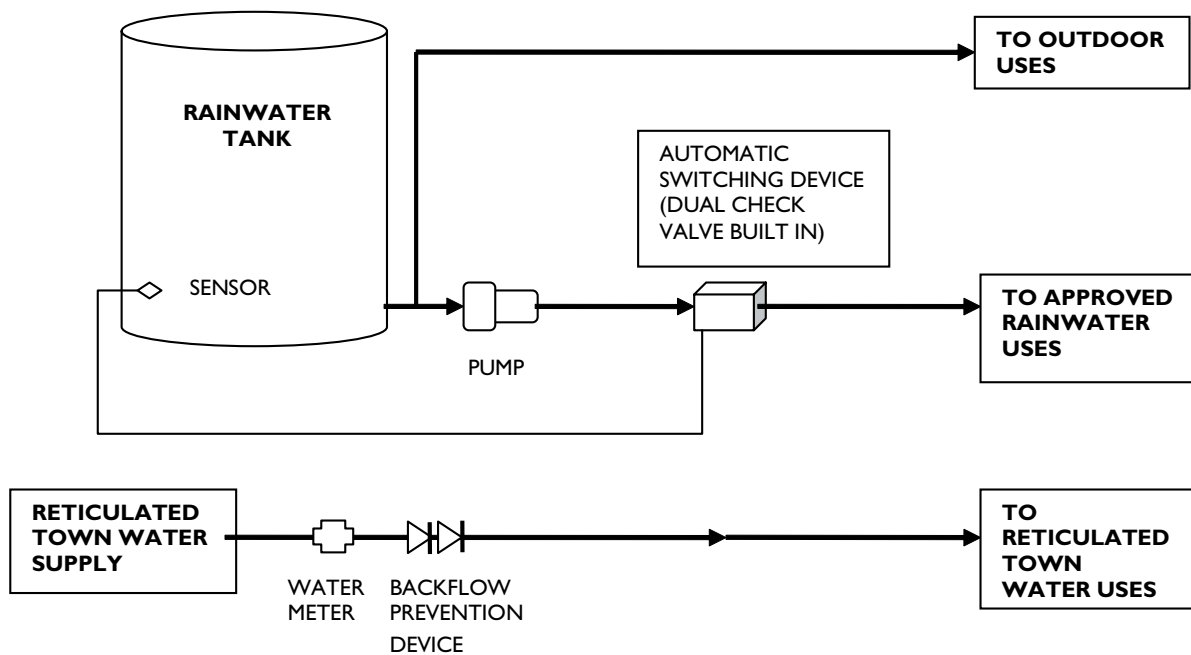


Figure 2. Rainwater tank using an automatic switching device