

20 September 2016



WHAT

This fact sheet provides an overview of our 2015 household survey's findings on water usage, and our analysis of:

- ▼ What are the 'drivers' of household water usage?
- ▼ Why do households in some areas use more water than in others?
- ▼ Why do higher income households use more water than lower income ones?
- ▼ Do houses place greater demand on the sewerage system than flats?

We have also published a report that contains a detailed analysis of these issues.



WHY

Our household surveys include questions on water usage to help us understand the context of our decisions on water and sewerage prices, and to inform broader policy debates. The information provided in our report on water usage could help to inform water and sewerage pricing policies and demand management strategies. We will use analysis of our household survey to help inform our decisions.



HOW

We commissioned Roy Morgan Research to conduct the survey in five areas. It also obtained water usage data for 2,688 households in three of these areas:

- ▼ Sydney Water Corporation's area of operation (Sydney)
- ▼ Hunter Water Corporation's area of operation (Hunter), and
- ▼ Gosford City Council area (Gosford).

It did not obtain usage data for households that rent and do not pay the water usage charge.

We analysed the 'drivers' of water usage by using regression techniques.



FINDINGS

- ▼ The number of people in a household is a more important 'driver' of how much water the household uses than its income. Each adult adds about 47 kL pa and each child adds about 18 kL pa.
- ▼ A high income household with two adults and two children living in Eastern Sydney is likely to use about 10% more water than a low income household with the same number of adults and children living in the same area (but 25% more electricity).
- ▼ Households in Gosford use less water than those in the other areas, mainly for reasons that our survey did not capture. This low usage may be partly a result of the severe water shortages in this area during the 2000s drought.
- ▼ There are wide variations in usage within each income group, driven partly by wide variations in household size. But on average, high income households are larger and use more water than low income households.
- ▼ Households in flats place less demand on the sewerage system because on average their indoor water usage is between 67% and 80% of that for household in houses.



WHAT ELSE

We have also published:

- ▼ Other fact sheets and information papers about the survey, and our findings on energy usage, energy and water conservation, solar PV panels, payment difficulties, and concession cards and rebates
- ▼ reports on water and energy usage (which include technical appendices), and
- ▼ output tables of the survey responses (Excel files). (See Box 1.)

These documents are available on our [website](#).

Box 1 Further information on our household survey

We have published the results of the 2015 household survey in a series of facts sheets and information papers together with two reports that investigate our findings on water and energy usage. We have also published a set of output tables (Excel files) that report the detailed responses to each survey question.

Fact sheets and information papers:

- ▼ About the survey
- ▼ Water usage (this one, fact sheet only)
- ▼ Energy usage (fact sheet only)
- ▼ Energy and water conservation
- ▼ Solar PV panels
- ▼ Payment difficulties
- ▼ Concession cards and rebates

Reports:

- ▼ Residential energy usage (electricity and gas)
- ▼ Residential water usage

Output tables:

- ▼ Each survey area and NSW as a whole (the latter weighted to represent the regional distribution of the population)
- ▼ Sydney, by income group and as a whole
- ▼ Hunter, by income group and as a whole

We cannot report on the other survey areas by income group because the sample sizes for some of the income categories are too small.

We engaged Frontier Economics (Frontier) to conduct statistical analysis of the survey data for our reports. Frontier analysed the energy usage data and produced a separate report on its findings. It also analysed the water usage data, and we have included its findings in our report on water usage. The reports include detailed technical appendices to allow other parties to conduct further research into residential energy and water usage.

You will find the documents on our [website](#).