



Regional Demand Management Plan 2023-2026

Summary

The value of water – we are all responsible for its efficient use

So, how is Rous going to support you, our community, to make sure we are using water, a precious natural resource, as efficiently and sustainably as possible?

In the water industry, the term used for water efficiency is demand management. This term refers to not wasting water and, where possible, saving it or reducing its use to lessen the demand on our limited water supply.

Wherever possible, it is important that we reduce demand on our water supply because the water that comes through our taps, services our homes, and supports

our businesses, is sourced from our local environment.

Water is a limited natural resource, and, in our region, we are currently almost entirely reliant on rainfall. We need to be mindful of how we use water, where we waste it and how we can conserve it.

2022 has been an exceptionally wet year, and although water seems plentiful, we will without doubt enter drier times and drought in the future. Setting ourselves up to practice water efficient habits and behaviours is important now, even during wet times.

It's time for a new Regional Demand Management Plan for Rous

Rous County Council's new Regional Demand Management Plan focuses on various water efficiency actions for the next four years.

Why have we developed a new Regional Demand Management Plan?

We have developed this new Plan following a review of demand management activities over the previous four years to build on our long history of involvement in water efficiency and demand management. This review included consultation with

our partner councils (Lismore, Byron, Ballina, and Richmond Valley councils) and an investigation into best practice demand management and water efficiency programs further afield.

What actions are we focusing on?

The actions of the new Regional Demand Management Plan represent activities that will have greatest value and benefit for our community.

The Plan is centred around you, our community, telling us what you need, to be mindful of your water use and what information and support (and in what forms) will be most helpful to make meaningful change in your homes and workplaces.

We know that long-term change is often achieved when people take actions not because they are consciously trying to reduce water use, but because those actions add convenience to their daily lives.

Broadly speaking, we will achieve this through several core actions including:

For households

- A behaviour change pilot program that will inform what and how we deliver support to our community – what is of most value to you.
- Continued rainwater tank rebates. The value of these rebates will be determined through the behaviour change pilot program. We want to know if this is the best way to support our community or are there better options out there?

How can you be involved?

If adopted by Council, this new Regional Demand Management Plan will offer plenty of opportunities for our community to get involved. In the meantime, we would love

For businesses

- The expansion of our Sustainable Water Partner Program beyond the large water using businesses we work with, to small-medium businesses as well. Ongoing support and significant rebates to assist our local business community will be a focus.

For community

- We are focusing on enhancing education opportunities with local school students, community groups and local events. A new Regional Education Officer role will focus on engaging our community around water use, wastewater and catchment health themes.

These actions will be supported by the efforts of our partner Councils who are independently leading Water Loss Management Programs and smart metering investigations, trials and implementation.

We are also placing focus on improving monitoring and evaluation so we can continue to make improvements over time.

your feedback on the Plan and actions proposed. Read more by visiting the project page and provide your comments by close of business Monday, 12 September 2022.

Project documents include:

- *Rous Regional Demand Management Plan 2023-2026.*
- *Regional Demand Management Plan Review and Update - Background Information and Recommended Plan Components.* This is an extensive document that provides background information around what is included in the Plan and why, similarly, what is not included and why.