

# Media Release

The Hon Lisa Neville MP

Minister for Water

Minister for Police and Emergency Services



**DELIVERING  
FOR ALL VICTORIANS**

Friday, 15 March 2019

## GOING WILD TO SAVE WATER AT MELBOURNE ZOO

Some of the city's wildest residents are doing their part to help the environment, with Melbourne Zoo using recycled water to fill animal pools, water the grounds and clean the elephants.

Minister for Water Lisa Neville visited the zoo today to see how they are implementing water efficiency measures, including an on-site water treatment plant, sustainable irrigation and rainwater harvesting.

Water is collected from rainwater run-off, animal wash-downs and over flowing lakes before it is treated at the plant onsite – producing Class A recycled water that can be used around the grounds.

Half the water used at Melbourne Zoo is now recycled onsite, with the water treatment plant producing 105 megalitres of water in 2017-18 – enough to fill 42 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

The zoo has also changed the sorts of plants it selects for the grounds, focusing on species which need less water with a higher priority on hardy native species. This has helped to reduce the demand on the water supply.

Melbourne Zoo is one of 58 Victorian businesses involved in the Government's *Integrated Water Management* program, which helps them to explore innovative ways to use recycled water, stormwater and rainwater.

With Victoria experiencing its third hottest year on record in 2018, and the outlook for a warmer, drier autumn than average, it's more important than ever for organisations and households to look at how they can save water.

Melbourne's water storage levels are sitting at 55.1 per cent, which is the lowest level since July 2011 and 158 gigalitres (GL) less than the same time last year.

The desalination plant is helping to boost these levels, adding 76 GL into our water supply in the last three years, with another order expected in the coming weeks.

Melburnians love saving water, with average daily water use falling from 245 litres per person in 2001 to 161 litres per person today – providing an annual saving of 150 GL. By saving an extra half a bucket per person per day we can reach our target of 155 litres per person per day.

Permanent water saving rules around the use of garden hoses, watering systems and fountains are also ensuring households around the state are making the most efficient use of Victoria's precious water resources.

### Quotes attributable to Minister for Water Lisa Neville

*"Keeping elephants clean is a mammoth task – but by using recycled water, Melbourne Zoo is setting a great example that it is possible to do more with less water."*

*"With Melbourne's water storage levels at their lowest for almost eight years and a warmer, drier than average autumn expected, it's important all Victorians do their best to be waterwise at home and at work."*

*"We can all do our part to secure our Victoria's water supply, simply by making a few small changes to the way we use water in our homes, businesses and community."*