

Media Release

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Tank it to the Limit – Sure up Your Rainwater Supply

As winter closes in and wet weather follows, now is the time to think about collecting that free and precious resource – rain.

Rainwater tanks are a good idea for those who want to save on water bills and make their home more eco-friendly.

However installing a tank may require a building permit and water supply connections must be carried out by a licensed and registered plumber.

Rainwater tanks must be secured on appropriate and adequate supporting bases while water to and from the tank and stormwater drain must be connected by a plumber with current registration and a license to perform the work.

Victorian Building Authority (VBA) Director Technical and Regulation, Joseph Genco says it is important to check with your council to find out if a planning permit is needed and what the health and building regulations are.

“A registered and licensed plumber will be able to advise you on the best size and type of tank and best location for it on your property” Mr Genco said. “Free-standing tanks do not require a building permit, but the base must be strong enough to take the weight of the tank when it’s full of water.”

Mr Genco said homeowners should also consider the potential danger to people or damage to adjoining property if a tank toppled over.

“A 2000 litre water tank weighs more than two tonnes so it’s important compliance safety standards are met.”

To find a licensed and registered plumber or for further information about rainwater tanks at your home, contact the Victorian Building Authority [here](#) or visit your local water retailer.

ENDS

What to do when installing a rainwater tank

- A licensed and registered plumber must connect the roof catchment to the rainwater tank and the tank overflow to the stormwater drain. Jobs valued at \$750 or more (including the tank, fittings and labour) require a compliance certificate to be issued by the plumber.
- Where rainwater is to be used for toilet flushing and provision is made for this to be augmented from a drinking water supply, the plumber must ensure adequate backflow prevention to protect against health impacts.
- Australian Standards and guidelines apply to the design, material, manufacture and installation of rainwater tanks. A licenced and registered plumber can help identify which tanks meet your needs.
- If you need to change the position of your downpipes or gutters to maximise your rainwater collection, you must use a licensed and registered plumber.
- Overflows or discharge pipes from roof mounted evaporative air conditioners should not be allowed to discharge onto the roof catchment area for your tank due to water quality issues.
- Keep your roof and gutters clean and flush your tank every two or three years. Tanks should not be entered for cleaning – do it from outside with a hose or engage a professional cleaner.

- For those building a new home, installing a rainwater tank and connecting it to all sanitary flushing systems can help achieve the minimum regulatory requirements of the 6 Star building standard so talk to your builder, architect or licenced and registered plumber.