

TAPPED IN

Bringing you news, updates and information from Watercare



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 WANT TO LEARN
 MORE ABOUT YOUR
 WATER USAGE?

Visit our website
 and search for
 'Be Waterwise' or call
 us on 09 442 2222 to
 book in your free home
 water assessment.

Shelley, Anton and 18-month-old Ben are reducing their water use.

Helping households change their ways with water

A young family from Glen Eden is now well on their way to forming new water-use habits and lowering their monthly water bill thanks to our free waterwise advice line.

After looking at the data on their water bill, Shelley Scarlett says she was shocked to see her family's usage was higher than an average three-person household in Auckland. She got in touch with Watercare and we connected her with our waterwise advice line, delivered by EcoMatters Environment Trust.

Shelley shared her family's water-use habits with EcoMatters sustainability advisor Olivia Tukuogo, who then created a report tailored for the family.

The family already had an efficient showerhead and dual-flush toilets, so Olivia had to find other areas where savings could be made.

In the kitchen, she suggested installing a flow-restricting aerator to the mixer tap. That

simple improvement immediately halved the flow rate.

Shelley had carried out a simple leak test prior to phoning EcoMatters and had picked up a 'slow leak' of 1.1 litres overnight. She also reported hearing the toilet refilling occasionally during the night. On hearing this, Olivia suggested they place a piece of toilet paper inside the back of the toilet bowl to determine whether the cistern was leaking into the pan – a common and easily-repaired problem usually caused by perished rubber seals.

Shelley says the paper became wet within minutes, confirming the source of the slow leak.

Outside, Olivia recommended mulching around shrubs and on non-edible garden beds in order to retain moisture, suppress weed growth and add nutrients to the soil. The family's thirsty large palm will appreciate this in the summer heat.

Shelley says the hardest change to make has been using the washing machine less frequently after learning that the average number of washing loads for a family of their size is four full loads a week.

"We were doing up to 10 because of our decision to use cloth nappies, so this has stuck with me and I'm very conscious now of how many loads we do. If I can stretch out another day between washes, I do!"

Shelley says the advice line is "a wonderful service. It is really comprehensive and personalised, which made me take on board the suggestions a lot more than if someone just generally told me to take shorter showers".

Her advice to other high-water using households is simple: "Awareness is key. You can't change your habits if you're not aware that there is a problem."

STAYING WATERWISE THIS SUMMER

As the weather warms up and we spend more time outdoors, demand for water inevitably increases. Aucklanders are already the most efficient water users in the country yet there are still a lot of things you can do to cut down on unnecessary water usage; it's not about going without but using water wisely and minimising wastage of this precious resource.

Some Watercare employees reveal the clever tips they use at home to reduce their water usage and bills during the summer months...



Tuan Hawke
Water

"We collect the water from our dehumidifier and, instead of tipping it out, use it to water our indoor plants."



Sally Smith
Education in schools

"I always turn the tap off when I brush my teeth because I know it saves about four litres of water every time. That's eight litres per person, per day! Imagine the savings you'd make if everyone in your household made this a habit."



Roseline Klein
Sustainability

"I bought a front-loading washing machine with a five-star water rating because it uses as little as 53 litres per wash. That's about 150 litres less than older top-loading machines."



Chris Garton
Wastewater

"I keep a jug of water in the fridge. It saves wasting water waiting for the tap to run cold to get a glass to drink."



Anin Nama
Water and wastewater operations

"I look at the water usage data in my water bills regularly for any abnormal usage. If there is a big increase, I know there could be a leak somewhere on my property that needs fixing."



Swathy Gudipoodi
Finance

"I put on full loads of washing to save water and energy whenever possible."



Barry Chappell
Human resources

"I always use a bucket of water when I wash my car and save the hose for a quick spray to finish. Commercial car washes are another great option as the wash water is captured and treated, and won't pollute the environment. Some newer car washes even recycle and reuse the water."



Kay Pillay
Customer services

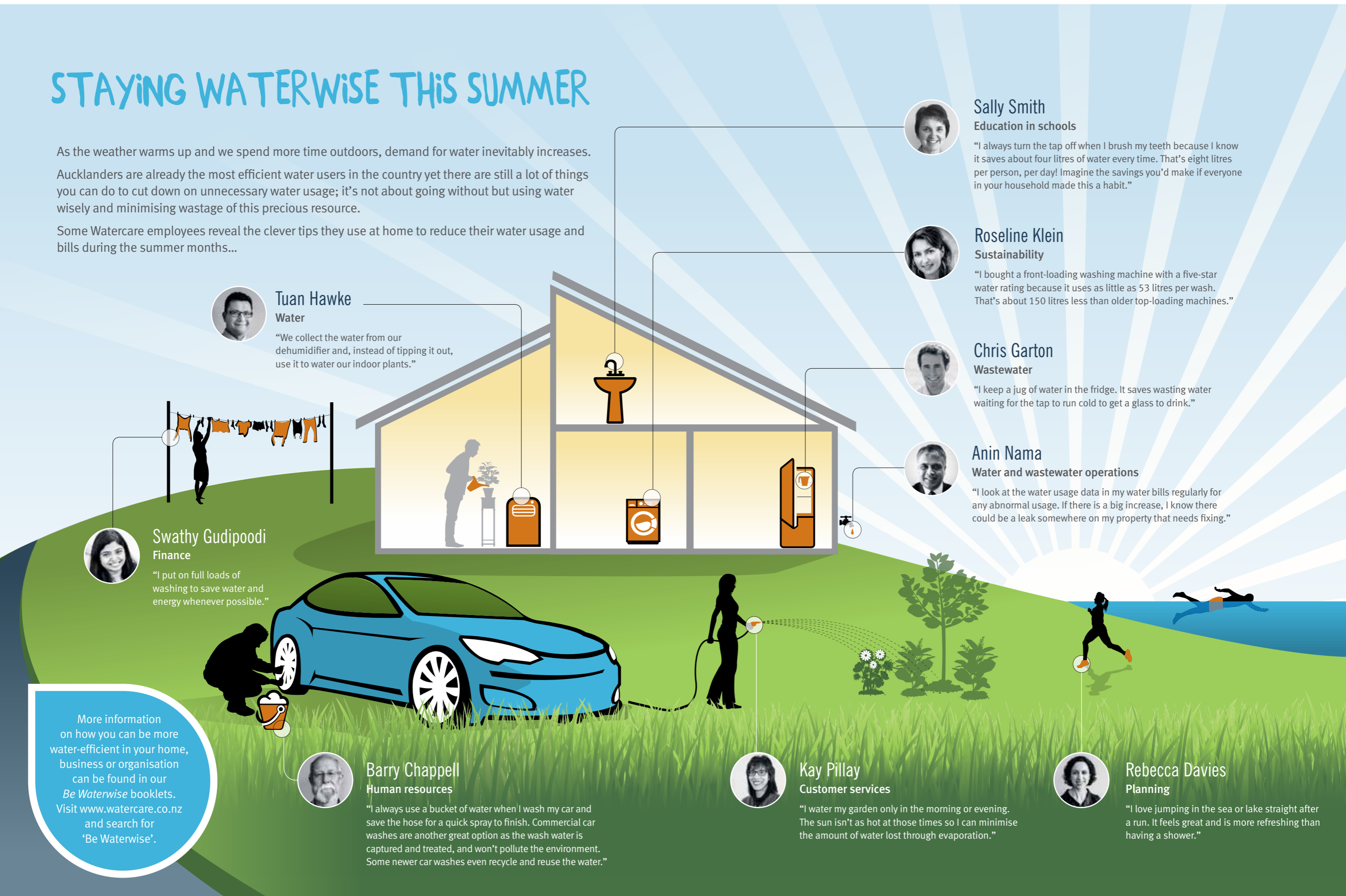
"I water my garden only in the morning or evening. The sun isn't as hot at those times so I can minimise the amount of water lost through evaporation."



Rebecca Davies
Planning

"I love jumping in the sea or lake straight after a run. It feels great and is more refreshing than having a shower."

More information on how you can be more water-efficient in your home, business or organisation can be found in our *Be Waterwise* booklets. Visit www.watercare.co.nz and search for 'Be Waterwise'.





Cosseys Dam in the Hunua Ranges "will take a lot of beating as a site," says Wal.

Visit Cosseys Dam these holidays

Dam safety engineer Wallace 'Wal' McQuarrie says a walk alongside this spectacular dam is a great – and free – way to spend a summer's day.

Spanning 123 hectares, Cosseys Dam can be found just 50 kilometres south-east of Auckland's CBD, within the Hunua Falls Regional Park.

The dam, which is made of earth and rock, was completed in 1955. It underwent an upgrade in the early 2000s.

Dams improve the quality of the water they store because sediment particles settle on the lakebed and bacteria levels reduce.

Wal has a particular affinity with Cosseys, having visited the dam for routine inspections over the years. He was also the dam safety representative during the upgrade in the early 2000s.

"You are surrounded by native bush and feel enveloped in it out there," says Wal.

Getting there: From Auckland, take the Papakura motorway exit and follow Hunua Road (about 14 kilometres) until you reach Falls Road just north of the Hunua township.

Falls Road leads to the large car park near Hunua Falls. From the car park, you can choose to walk the 8.3-kilometre Cossey-Massey Loop or the 5-kilometre return walk via the Cossey Gorge Track.

The loop track that brings you alongside Cosseys also boasts long-range views of the dam and passes a number of impressive giant kauri trees.

For a shorter walk, turn left off Falls Road onto Cossey Access Road and park near the reservoir.

Congratulations, Wal!

In November, dam safety engineer Wallace 'Wal' McQuarrie celebrates 45 years of working at Watercare.

He started in 1970, when the organisation was running as the Auckland Regional Authority.

"When I was a kid, I told mum I wanted to dig ditches and cut gorse. I ended up running the forestry out at the Hunua Ranges and digging some of the biggest drains or ditches in Auckland," he says.

Wal has served on the management committee of the New Zealand Society on Large Dams since the late 1980s and edited the country's first guideline document on dam safety.

He is now based in our Newmarket office, sharing his wealth of knowledge on dam safety and maintenance with our two caretakers and six dam technicians.

"It's been a grand 45 years," says Wal.



DID YOU KNOW?



OUR DAM LEVELS
FALL IN THE
SUMMER
AND RISE IN THE
WINTER

WHY?

Because there is less rainfall and our customers use more water in the summer.

On hot days, Aucklanders consume more than

**350
MILLION**

litres of water from our dams.

KEEP IN TOUCH

Tapped In is your newsletter. If you would like to talk to us about any stories from this edition or your ideas for future issues, we'd love to hear from you. To get in touch, please phone our communications team on (09) 442 2222 or email info@water.co.nz.