

## **RAIN HARVESTING – THE AUSTRALIAN PERSPECTIVE**

### **Current water crisis**

- Australia is the driest inhabited continent
- The current El Nino climate event has placed huge pressure on water stores
  - Sydney 34% (15 months supply)
  - Melbourne 36%
  - Brisbane 22%

### **Government response to water crisis**

- Look for new storage sites
- Restrict town water usage, possibly indefinitely
- Offer rebates for rainwater harvesting system installation
- Mandate rainwater harvesting system installation

### **History of the water tank in Australia**

- Water tanks are a traditional part of the landscape in rural and regional Australia through necessity.
- Rainwater tanks are becoming integral in Australia's urban streetscape. 4% of homes in Brisbane currently have a rainwater tank installed.

### **Rainwater tanks in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century**

- Selection of materials
  - Polyethylene
  - Steel
  - Concrete
- Sophisticated rainwater harvesting systems to ensure high quality, vermin free water and sustainability of the entire system. Includes rain heads, first flush water diverters, insect proof screens and wireless tank level monitoring.
- Integral part of new home design & construction, rather than an "add on" item
- Rainwater tanks are now viewed as a significant selling point of a home and more desirable than plasma televisions and spa baths

Australians are embracing rainwater harvesting, voluntarily and through government initiated building codes and guidelines.