

**WATERWISE VERGE INCENTIVE SCHEME
WINTER SPRINKLER BAN**

Statement by Minister for Water

MS M.J. DAVIES (Central Wheatbelt — Minister for Water) [12.11 pm]: I take this opportunity to advise members of a new incentive scheme launched by the Water Corporation to help Waterwise councils promote low-water-use verges. Through the scheme, the Water Corporation will match investments made by Waterwise councils to offer ratepayers a rebate or incentive to create a waterwise verge. Regional and metropolitan Waterwise councils, of which there are now 28, are eligible to receive up to \$10 000 a year to support waterwise verge incentive schemes. As other councils become endorsed as being “Waterwise”—30 are in the pipeline—and adopt verge guidelines, they too will be able to join the scheme. As well as helping councils and property owners adapt to our drying climate, the scheme provides a benchmark for local governments to create sustainable, waterwise verge policies for ratepayers. Some councils, such as the City of Subiaco, already offer great incentives for ratepayers to create waterwise verges. Two weeks ago I visited a home in Daglish with a beautiful waterwise verge that was full of native plants. I met with resident Kitty Spackman, who is a convert to the benefits of having a waterwise garden. Kitty is a great ambassador, and I thank her for showing me her garden and the waterwise verge that she had in place. I encourage councils and ratepayers to take advantage of the Water Corporation’s new incentive scheme to make their verges look great and help save precious water.

I also want to remind members that the winter sprinkler ban is in full effect, and will remain in place until 31 August. This is an important water-saving measure introduced in 2010, and one this government continues to implement. Over the past six winters the ban has saved more than 25 billion litres of water, or, in the spirit of the upcoming Olympics, about 11 200 Olympic-sized swimming pools. The ban covers Perth, Mandurah and the majority of the south west. Sprinkler bans during winter also apply to garden bore users in those areas, importantly giving our shallow aquifer time to recharge while demand is reduced. We know our gardens and public open space can still be enjoyed without the need to use water from the public supply or private bores. Winter rainfall and lower temperatures that reduce the impact of evaporation allow gardens and green space to survive during winter. Members may have recently read about a significant spike in infringements issued in the first two weeks of winter compared with previous years. Breaching the winter sprinkler ban can attract a \$100 penalty, and Water Corporation inspectors are out monitoring people’s sprinkler use. I hope all members lead by example in abiding by the winter sprinkler ban, and communicate the importance of this water-saving measure to their constituents.