

WASTE WATER RECYCLING BENCHMARK

70. Hon NIGEL HALLETT to the Leader of the House representing the Minister for Water Resources:

Can the minister detail why it will take six years to reach the 20 per cent waste water recycling benchmark recently set by the government for 2012?

Hon KIM CHANCE replied:

I thank the member for some notice of this question.

The state water strategy set an aspirational target of 20 per cent recycling by 2012. It was expected that this target would be achieved incrementally, as projects were developed. Subsequently, the Kwinana water reclamation plant was constructed, and plans are under way for its expansion. The state government is investigating the use of managed aquifer recharge with reverse osmosis-treated waste water to be reinjected into the Gnangara mound, which will result in levels of recycling significantly greater than 20 per cent. This takes time, as ground water flows and monitoring take a number of years, and research is currently under way to understand local impacts. We also need to progress this initiative with close community consultation - keeping the community fully informed as our understanding improves - and this cannot be rushed. It should be noted that the water recycling rate in country Western Australia is already at around 40 per cent, which compares favourably with that in Israel, which leads the world in water recycling.