

WATERWISE REBATE PROGRAM

456. Mr J.B. D'ORAZIO to the Premier:

Can the Premier advise the House of the initial results of the Waterwise rebate program?

Dr G.I. GALLOP replied:

Mr Speaker -

Several members interjected.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: As members would be aware -

Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan interjected.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: As members would be aware, I launched -

Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan interjected.

The SPEAKER: The Deputy Leader of the Opposition!

Dr G.I. GALLOP: As members would be aware, I launched the state water strategy -

Mr D.F. Barron-Sullivan interjected.

The SPEAKER: I call the Deputy Leader of the Opposition to order for the first time.

Dr G.I. GALLOP: As members would be aware, I launched the state water strategy on 10 February. A key component of the strategy is the \$7 million Waterwise rebate program, under which purchasers of water-wise products are eligible for rebates of \$10 for showerheads, \$150 for water-efficient washing machines and up to \$300 for the installation of rainwater tanks and garden bores.

I am pleased to report that the first two weeks of the Waterwise rebate program have been very successful. Nearly 900 applications have been processed and another 200 have been received. For the purchase of a water-efficient washing machine, 349 applications have been processed, with a total rebate outlay of more than \$50 000; 62 new bore owners have received rebates totalling just under \$19 000; 455 applications for eligible showerheads have been processed; and 27 rainwater tanks have been purchased. Of course, if the Premier had applied for a rebate for his new showerhead, it would have been 456, but I did not. Applications from Dampier to Esperance have been processed, with residents in more than 30 country Western Australian locations obtaining a rebate for their purchases. In addition, some 2 840 phone calls have been received by the Waterwise information hotline from people seeking information on what rebates are available and how they can access them.

It is obvious that in its early days, there is great community support for this program. We are pleased by that because we want the people of Western Australia to play a role in their future water supplies. That was the advice we received from the symposium that was held in this Parliament and that is the strategy we are putting in place. Do members know what the Opposition's strategy is? It is to say that there are no problems with the water supply in Western Australia! Opposition members say that the so-called water crisis is a concoction of the Government. That is their attitude to this major issue that faces us as we go into the twenty-first century. Yet again we see the head-in-the-sand, sweep-it-under-the-carpet nature of the Opposition in Western Australia today.