

## 3. Water resources

### 3.1. Average annual residential water supplied – W12

The average annual residential water supplied indicator (W12) reports the average volume (kL/property) of metered and estimated non-metered potable and non-potable water supplied to residential properties during the reporting year. It is derived by dividing the total volume of residential water supplied (W8) by the number of connected residential water properties (C2). The average volume is influenced by a number of factors, including:

- weather events
- rainfall and temperature
- water conservation measures (for example, water restrictions)
- availability of water supply
- housing density
- water prices.

Rainfall is the most influential factor affecting residential consumption. An increase in rainfall is likely to reduce demand and a decrease in rainfall is likely to increase demand. A decrease in rainfall can result in a significant decrease in runoff into storages and trigger demand-management measures such as water restrictions.

Average annual residential water supply (W12) data for all utilities reporting in 2023–24 is given in Table A1, Appendix A.

#### 3.1.1. Key findings

Table 3.1 shows a summary of the median average annual volume of water supplied to residential customers by utility size group.

Nationally, the average annual volume of water supplied in 2023–24 increased by 6.0%, driven by a 5.0% increase in the median for the Major and Medium size groups. The increase in residential water supply across all utility size groups is consistent with the above to very much above average temperatures in most of the country which caused greater demand for water.

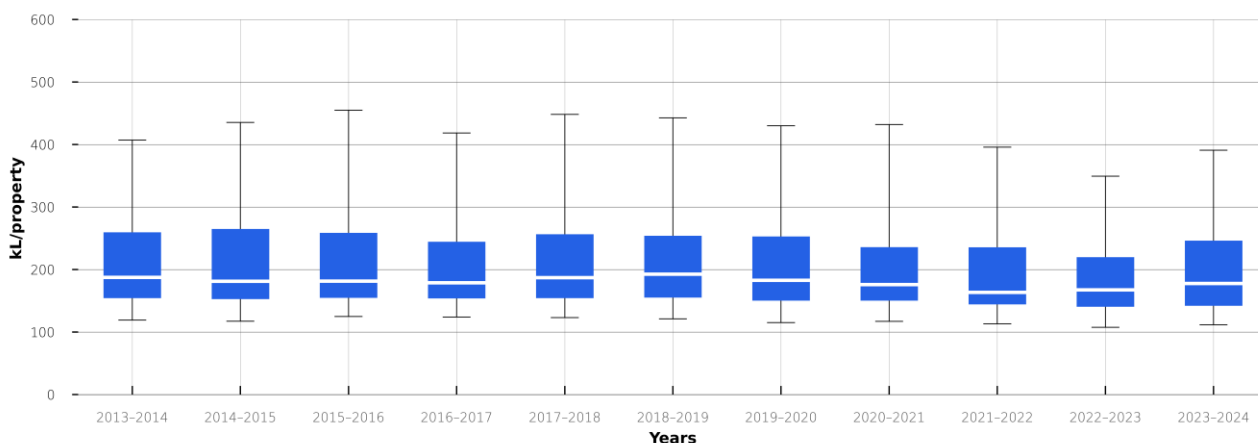
More utilities reported an increase in the average annual residential water supplied than those reporting a decrease in all size groups (overall 61 out of 76 reporting utilities recorded an increase). Orange City Council (New South Wales) in the Small size group was the only utility with no change in its average annual residential water supplied compared to the previous year. Dubbo Regional Council (New South Wales) in the Medium size group reported the highest increase (38.4%), and Ballina Shire Council (New South Wales) in the Small size group reported the highest decrease (19.1%) in average annual residential water supplied from 2022–23.

**Table 3.1 Overview of results: Average annual residential water supplied (kL/property)**

Utility group	Range		No. utilities with increase/decrease from 2022–23		Median		Change in median from 2022–23 (%)
	High	Low	Increase	Decrease	2022–23	2023–24	
Major	242 WC (Perth)	134 Logan	14	1	152	159	5
Large	389 P&W (Darwin)	140 Toowoomba	8	4	181	189	4
Medium	455 Lower Murray Water	111 South Gippsland Water	14	7	171	179	5
Small	397 P&W (Alice Springs)	91 Westernport Water	25	3	180	187	4
<b>All size groups (national)</b>	<b>455</b> <b>Lower Murray Water</b>	<b>91</b> <b>Westernport Water</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>178</b>	<b>6</b>

**Note:** The median average annual residential water supplied (kL/property) for each year is calculated using data from all active utilities providing water supply services in that reporting year.

Figure 3.1 shows a box-and-whisker plot of the average annual volume of residential water supplied for all utilities reporting W12. While Australia's total rainfall in 2023–24 was above the 1961–90 average (14.0%), it was lower than the previous year's total rainfall across the country. The relatively drier conditions in 2023–24 compared to the previous year explain the increased median residential water supply across the country.



**Figure 3.1 Average annual residential water supplied (kL/property)**

### 3.1.2. Results and analysis – Major utility group

Figure 3.2 shows a ranked breakdown of the average volume of residential water supplied for each utility in the Major utility group from 2019–20 to 2023–24.



Figure 3.2 Average annual residential water supplied (kL/property) – Major utility group

For the past 5 years since 2019–20, Water Corporation – Perth (Western Australia) has reported the largest, and Logan City Council (Queensland) has reported the smallest average annual volume of water supplied to residential customers.

Variations from the previous year ranged from a 0.6% decrease reported by Logan City Council (Queensland) (the only decrease among all utilities in the Major size group) to a 10.5% increase reported by SA Water Corporation (South Australia) (Table A1 in Appendix A).

## **3.2. Total recycled water supplied – W26**

Total recycled water supplied (ML) is the sum of all treated sewage effluent used by the utility and its customers. It includes residential, commercial, industrial, agricultural and environmental use as well as on-site use by the utility.

The volume of recycled water supplied is affected by a number of factors, including:

- availability of potable water
- size of the utility
- the utility's proximity to potential customers (for example, agricultural users, major industrial customers and recreational facilities)
- fluctuations in sewage received and effluent available for recycling
- government policy.

Total recycled water supplied (W26) data for all utilities reporting in 2023–24 is shown in Table A2, Appendix A.

### **3.2.1. Key findings**

Table 3.2 shows a summary of the total recycled water supplied by utility size group.

Nationally, the total volume of recycled water supplied increased by 7% in 2023–24, driven by a 10% increase in the Large utility size group. The Small utility size group saw a decrease of 3%, while other groups reported increases compared to the previous year.

More utilities in all size groups reported an increase in the total volume of recycled water supplied than those reporting a decrease (overall 46 out of 73 reporting utilities recorded an increase). The changes varied significantly compared to the previous year, with Wingecarribee Shire Council (New South Wales) in the Medium size group reporting the highest increase (778.0%), and Bathurst Regional Council (New South Wales) in the Small size group reporting the highest decrease (60.1%). Also, Bathurst Regional Council (New South Wales) identified a data consistency issue in reporting the volume of recycled water supply to non-residential customers, which affects the annual change in the total volume of recycled water supplied.

**Table 3.2 Overview of results: Total recycled water supplied (ML)**

Utility group	Range		No. utilities with increase/decrease from 2022–23		Total		Change in total from 2022–23 (%)
	High	Low	Increase	Decrease	2022–23	2023–24	
Major	40,361	31	9	5	120,936	130,518	8
	Sydney Water	Icon Water					
Large	10,626	0	8	3	25,903	28,422	10
	North East Water	P&W (Darwin)					
Medium	5,418	88	11	10	37,289	39,713	7
	Albury	Wingecarribee					
Small	2,290	21	18	8	14,852	14,452	-3
	WC (Albany)	Lismore					
<b>All size groups (national)</b>	<b>40,361</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>198,980</b>	<b>213,105</b>	<b>7</b>
	<b>Sydney Water</b>	<b>P&amp;W (Darwin)</b>					

**Note:** The total recycled water supplied (ML) is calculated using data from all utilities that reported data for W26 in both the 2022–23 and 2023–24 reporting years.

### 3.2.2. Results and analysis – Major utility group

In 2023–24, the total volume of recycled water supplied by all reporting utilities was 213,105 ML, around 61.2% of which was supplied by the Major utility group. For the past 5 years since 2019–20, Sydney Water Corporation (New South Wales) has reported the largest, and Icon Water Limited (Australian Capital Territory) the smallest total volume of recycled water supplied.

Variations from the previous year ranged from a 13.1% decrease reported by Barwon Region Water Corporation (Victoria) to an 82.4% increase reported by Icon Water Limited (Australian Capital Territory) (Table A2 in Appendix A).