Saving Water: Make it Your Business
Cleaning Practices

Most commercial and industrial operations have a weekly or daily equipment and area cleaning requirement to maintain hygiene standards and good housekeeping practices.

Cleaning processes can contibute from 10% to as much as over 40% of water consumption per site.

With some simple changes significant savings can be made to site water consumption with the added bonus of reducing costs associated with water heating, cleaning chemicals, wastewater treatment and disposal.

Adopt water saving practices
Procedural changes are often the key to minimising water use during cleaning shifts while not compromising hygiene standards or the desired level of cleanliness.

Upon altering any cleaning procedure it is imperative that an assessment is made to ensure changes will not adversely affect hygiene standards or the quality of the product.

Staff education

- Regularly talk to staff about water effiency and water efficient cleaning practices.
- Cleaning procedures should be defined clearly and regular audits performed to ensure procedures are followed and changes are successfully implemented.
- Educate cleaners and staff about the impact of excessive hosing, e.g. increased flow and waste to sewer and/or stormwater systems.
- Signage is a good way to remind staff of changes to cleaning procedures.

Behavioural changes
Along with reducing the volume of water that reaches the wastewater stream, improvements in housekeeping practices can often reduce pollutant concentration in wastewater.

- Inspect your site and equipment for the source of spills and leaks which may be increasing your wash down frequency.
- Use contamination control floor mats to reduce the volume of waste tracked through your business.
- Schedule product changes to process similar products simultaneously in order to minimise equipment washing between different products.
- Install baskets, silt traps or screens in drains, ensuring these are regularly emptied into waste bins.
- Install deflection panels or shutes to prevent product from falling off production equipment.
- Install drip trays or bunding where product may fall on the production floor and be washed into the wastewater stream.
- Calibrate filling equipment to prevent overfilling.

Further information
(08) 7424 1336
www.sawater.com.au
businesswatersaver@sawater.com.au

Government of South Australia
SA Water

Transition from wet to dry cleaning practices

- Transition to dry cleaning procedures by using brushes, vacuums, scrapers, squeegees, compressed air or any other instruments to reduce the requirement for wet cleaning practices (except when it is conducted for hygiene reasons and to protect public health and safety).
- Develop dry cleaning procedures to contain & collect spill materials.
- Use scrapers or squeegees to remove food residues from processing equipment prior to commencing wet cleaning procedures.
- To avoid floor wash down use dry absorbents to remove excess moisture and then sweep or vacuum these areas.

Supply and wash down hoses

- Install trigger operated spray nozzles on hoses and high pressure equipment. This will prevent water wastage by automatically turning flow off immediately or when left unattended.
- A hose left on for an hour a day can waste as much as 1000kL per year or $2500.
- Consider the use of trigger operated high pressure low flow washers to clean more efficiently.
- Reduce flow to supply hoses and pressure washers by installing inline flow restrictors.

Clean In Place (CIP) systems

- Check flow rates on all equipment and adjust to the manufacturer's recommendations.
- Use solenoid valves or timers to shutoff water when processes are not in operation.
- Check the angle of stationary sprays and ensure they are aimed correctly.
- Review the dispersal of sprays and ensure they are adjusted for maximum effect.
- Undertake a review of your cleaning chemicals. Changing the type of chemical can alter your concentration requirements and therefore the volume of water required.
- Investigate recycling final rinse water for use in next prerinse.
- Schedule product changeovers to reduce or eliminate CIP.

Automatic washers

When correctly maintained, operated and suited to the task automatic washers can be as much as 95% more water efficient than alternatives such as pressure washing.

- Regularly inspect automatic washers to ensure they are operating as efficiently as possible.
- Regularly discuss water efficiency with manufacturers or distributors to ensure equipment is kept up to date with advancements in water efficiency.
- Schedule washes only when fully loaded.
- Investigate reusing final rinse water for pre-rinse cycles in washers.

Outdoors:

- Dry sweep or vacuum hard surface areas .e.g. paths, paved areas, parking areas and loading areas.
- Ensure windows are cleaned with squeegees and water is used from a bucket. Alter the window cleaning schedule to only as required.
- Consider using a commercial car wash that recycles water and only wash cars as required.

To measure your current appliance flow rates simply use a jug / bucket and stopwatch and record the water volume against time elapsed.

For further information on water efficient products visit the product registry on the WELS website www.waterrating.gov.au

When altering flow rates ensure restriction devices are watermark certified and compatible with your water heater and the Australian Standard for Plumbing and Drainage AS/NZS 3500 is adhered to.