

Introduction

Changed building rules requiring new dwellings (and some extensions or alterations) in South Australia to have an additional water supply to supplement the mains water came into effect on July 1 2006.

These provisions were intended to reduce the demand on the State's mains water supply.

Installing specially plumbed, minimum-sized rainwater tanks is the most common way of meeting the additional water supply requirement. Other means of providing the required additional water supply could include developments using a dual reticulated (fixed pipe) water supply system – such as Mawson Lakes – or approved bore water.

Under the changes, the additional water supply has to be plumbed to either a toilet, a water heater or to all cold water outlets in the laundry of a new home.

The same rules apply to new extensions or alterations where the area of the extension or alteration is greater than 50m² and includes a toilet, water heater or laundry cold water outlet.

Plumbed rainwater tanks

If rainwater tanks are to be used to provide the additional water supply, new homes will need to be designed to ensure that rainwater from not less than 50m² of the roof is:

- Collected by gutters and downpipes
- Stored in a rainwater tank; and
- Plumbed to a toilet or a water heater or all laundry cold water outlets.

If the roof catchment area of the building is less than 50m² all the water run-off from the roof must be collected, stored and plumbed.

What size rainwater tank should be installed?

The rainwater tank must have a storage capacity not less than 1 kilolitre (1000 litres). The requirement for a minimum one kilolitre plumbed rainwater tank is additional to any other water storage tank requirements that might be required (e.g. other tanks are required in some areas for bushfire fighting purposes and on-site detention).

Where a number of dwellings contribute to a communal rainwater storage tank, each dwelling must contribute rainwater from 50m² of its roof catchment area to the rainwater tank and water from the tank must be plumbed back to each individual dwelling. In these situations, the minimum rainwater tank size required is determined by multiplying the number of dwellings that contribute to the rainwater tank by one kilolitre for each dwelling.

Are there any other requirements for the rainwater tank?

- An overflow device must be fitted; and
- A mosquito proof, non-degradable screen must be attached to protect the water quality.

Are there exemptions?

The following areas are exempt:

- The Municipal Council of Roxby Downs
- The District Council of Coober Pedy, and
- Areas designated as Out of Council areas.

Combined Retention and Detention Tanks

The City of Marion also has requirements for stormwater detention tanks in new developments constructed in areas north of Seacombe Road (refer to the brochure "*Stormwater Detention*"). Where both detention and retention tanks are required, combination tanks are permitted.

A combination tank is a tank constructed to store at least 1000 litres of water while also containing the required stormwater detention volume as specified by the "*Stormwater Detention*" brochure.

Such a tank would have to be connected to the dwelling as per the retention requirements and must also have the slow release orifice installed partway up to meet the detention requirements. You will need to consult a licensed plumber or tank manufacturer to assist in specifying the tank system.

Plumbing requirements

The plumbing aspects of the policy are regulated by the South Australian Water Corporation (SA Water) in accordance with the Waterworks Act 1932 and Waterworks Regulations 1996. SA Water require all plumbing work to comply with AS/NZS 3500:2003, the National Plumbing and Drainage Code and any SA Variations published by SA Water. The technical requirements for rainwater tanks are contained in Section 14 of AS/NZS 3500:2003 Part 1 and the SA Water Variations

A licensed plumber must:

- Install the piping system delivering the rainwater to the water closet, water heater or cold water laundry outlets and
- Complete a Certificate of Compliance certifying that the installation has been installed in accordance with AS/NZS 3500 and the SA Variations. The Certificate of Compliance must be provided to SA Water and the home owner within 7 days of completion of the work.

When must the rainwater tank be installed?

Regulation 83A of the Development Regulations 2008 states that all new Class 1a buildings (i.e. dwellings and dwelling additions) are required to have all connections made for the supply of water from **all sources** prior to the occupation of the dwelling. That is, all sources of water identified in the development approval (mains, rainwater tank, third pipe scheme) must be connected before the dwelling is occupied.

Development applications

All development applications lodged with local councils for new houses and relevant extensions/alterations for houses need to include details of how they will meet the water saving requirements. If rainwater tanks are to be used, details of the size, location, whether the tank is to be on a stand or at ground level, area of roof catchment to the tank and plumbing details for the installation of the tank must be included on the plans.

Installation of new rainwater tanks to existing houses.

Under Schedule 3 of the Development Regulations 2008, a new rainwater tank to an existing dwelling (and any supporting structure) does not require Development Approval if it meets the following requirements:

- is part of a roof-drainage system; and
- has a total floor area not exceeding 10 square metres; and
- is located wholly above ground; and
- has no part higher than 4 metres above the natural surface of the ground.

Irrespective of whether a tank requires Development Approval or not, the overflow from rainwater tanks should always be directed to the street. If the tank is to be supported by a stand, care should be taken to ensure that there is

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adequate support for the stand as a 1000 litre tank will weigh over 1 tonne when full. It is recommended that a licensed builder be consulted to provide advice on adequate support for the stand.

For more information

Details of the requirements are included in the South Australian Appendix to the Building Code of Australia Volume Two (BCA) and the South Australian Housing Code (SAHC).

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