



# Policy

## Rainwater Tanks in Urban Areas

2021

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## Information about this document

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### Document History

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E2013/44394	16 July 2013	Policy amended as per resolution - Res 13-307 on exhibition
E2013/75712	20/11/2013	Adopted – no submission received as per Res No. 13-307
E2021/17829	03/03/2021	Minor updates: references to legislation and guidelines, updated template for better accessibility. Administrative changes only. To ET for noting 03/03/2021

### Further Document Information and Relationships

Related Legislation	<u><a href="#">SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development Codes) 2008</a></u>
Related Policies	
Related Standards, Procedures, Statements, documents	<u><a href="#">Information published on the Rous County Council website – Guide to installing a rainwater tank: Byron Shire Council area</a></u> <u><a href="#">Byron Shire Council DCP 2010 Chapter 16</a></u> <u><a href="#">NSW Health – Rainwater tanks where a public water supply is available</a></u>

Note: Any reference to Legislation will be updated in the Policy as required. See website <http://www.legislation.nsw.gov.au/> for current Acts, Regulations and Environmental Planning Instruments.



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## 1. Objectives

- 1.1. To promote the conservation of water, capital and environmental resources.
- 1.2. To encourage and facilitate the installation and use of domestic rainwater tanks within the areas serviced by reticulated town water in Byron Shire for residential dwellings approved prior to 1 July 2005.
- 1.3. To ensure that the community has access to a reliable potable water supply.
- 1.4. To align Council policy with regional demand management initiatives.

## 2. Policy statement

- 2.1. Byron Shire Council actively encourages the use of water conservation measures, including rainwater tanks. The purpose of this policy is to facilitate and encourage the use of rainwater tanks as a major supplement to reticulated town water supply for residential dwellings approved prior to 1 July 2005.
- 2.2. In the past access to a central reticulated water supply was usually the most reliable source of drinking water for an urban community. Rainwater tanks however can store valuable water harvested from rain falling on the roofs of our buildings.
- 2.3. The harvesting and use of rainwater reduces the demand for reticulated water. This reduction in demand for central water has many benefits including:
  - Deferral of the need for new dams so that valuable natural habitat can be preserved. (State Government Policy excludes new on-stream dams.)
  - Deferral of capital expenditure on dams, reservoirs, treatment and reticulation infrastructure.
  - Increased capacity to maintain environmental flows in affected water courses.
  - A reduction in the volume and intensity of stormwater discharged to our water ways.
- 2.4. Water supply security is a function of the following factors: rainfall; catchment area; storage capacity; consumption. Where the first three are high and consumption is low, security from a water tank supply will match or even exceed that of a reticulated system.

## 3. Policy provisions

### 3.1 Financial incentives

#### a) Water and Sewer Usage Charges

The installation of rainwater tanks has the potential to reduce the consumption of town water in periods not effected by drought. In Byron Shire this means residents with rainwater tanks in urban areas can potentially achieve reductions in both the cost of water usage charges and sewer usage charges.



b) Subsidy

Where Regional demand management initiatives currently include a subsidy for the installation of a rainwater tank (i.e. properties supplied from Rocky Creek Dam), this subsidy will also be available for the township of Mullumbimby which is supplied from Councils Laverty's Gap Weir. The terms and conditions applicable to the subsidy in terms of tank sizes, installation requirements, connection requirements etc will be those current at the time.

c) Disconnection from Water and Sewer Systems

A property owner can apply to disconnect from the town water supply and sewerage systems where the property owner has installed approved independent water and sewerage systems such as rainwater tanks, groundwater bores, waterless composting toilets and an onsite sewage management system. In these circumstances the property will be charged the water and sewer fixed charge applicable to vacant lots.

### 3.2 Installation of rainwater tanks

Rainwater tanks should be installed in accordance with the current NSW Code of Practice for Plumbing and Drainage and any other applicable guidelines in relation to potable water.

### 3.3 Approvals for the installation of rainwater tanks

For new development applications rainwater tanks are often prescribed as part of the BASIX Certificate.

In other cases rainwater tanks can be considered to be "Exempt and Complying Development" for Council's planning purposes, thus not requiring a Development Application. The relevant planning documents should always be reviewed, however a summary of Byron DCP 2010 Chapter 16 and SEPP (Exempt and Complying Development) 2008 part 2 Division 1 Subdivision 32 requirements are listed below:

- 3.3.1 The tank does not exceed 10,000 litres
- 3.3.2 Is ancillary to an existing approved building
- 3.3.3 Is supported in accordance with manufacturer's recommendations and/or with structurally adequate support
- 3.3.4 Is designed to collect roof water only, but can be topped up from a water supply service pipe
- 3.3.5 Is fitted with a first flush device
- 3.3.6 Is enclosed and has any inlet screened, is structurally sound and is installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions
- 3.3.7 Does not require excavation or filling of more than 1 metre from natural ground level in order for it to be installed
- 3.3.8 Is not installed over or immediately adjacent to a water or sewer main



- 3.3.9 Is located behind the front building alignment (and also the side alignment for corner blocks)
- 3.3.10 Is located at least 450mm from any property boundary
- 3.3.11 Does not rest (in full or in part) on the footing of any building or on a retaining wall)
- 3.3.12 Has a sign affixed to it with a statement to the effect that the water in the tank is rainwater
- 3.3.13 Has overflow directed into an existing stormwater system
- 3.3.14 Is maintained to prevent mosquito breeding
- 3.3.15 If a motorised pump is used, it must not create an offensive noise.

### **3.4 Tank sizes**

Tables showing the sizes of tanks recommended for Byron Shire for given roof catchment areas and daily usage are contained in Appendix 1.



## Appendix 1

Chart 1

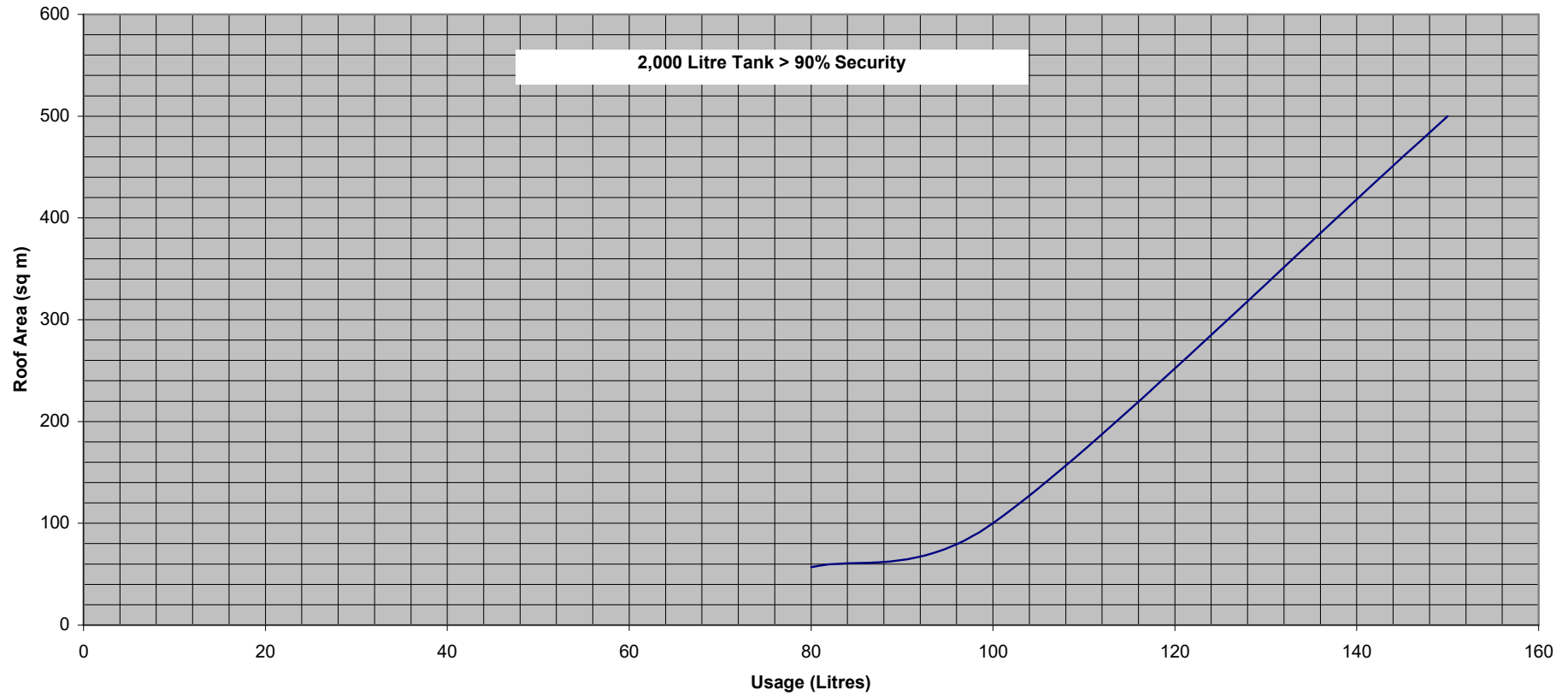




Chart 2

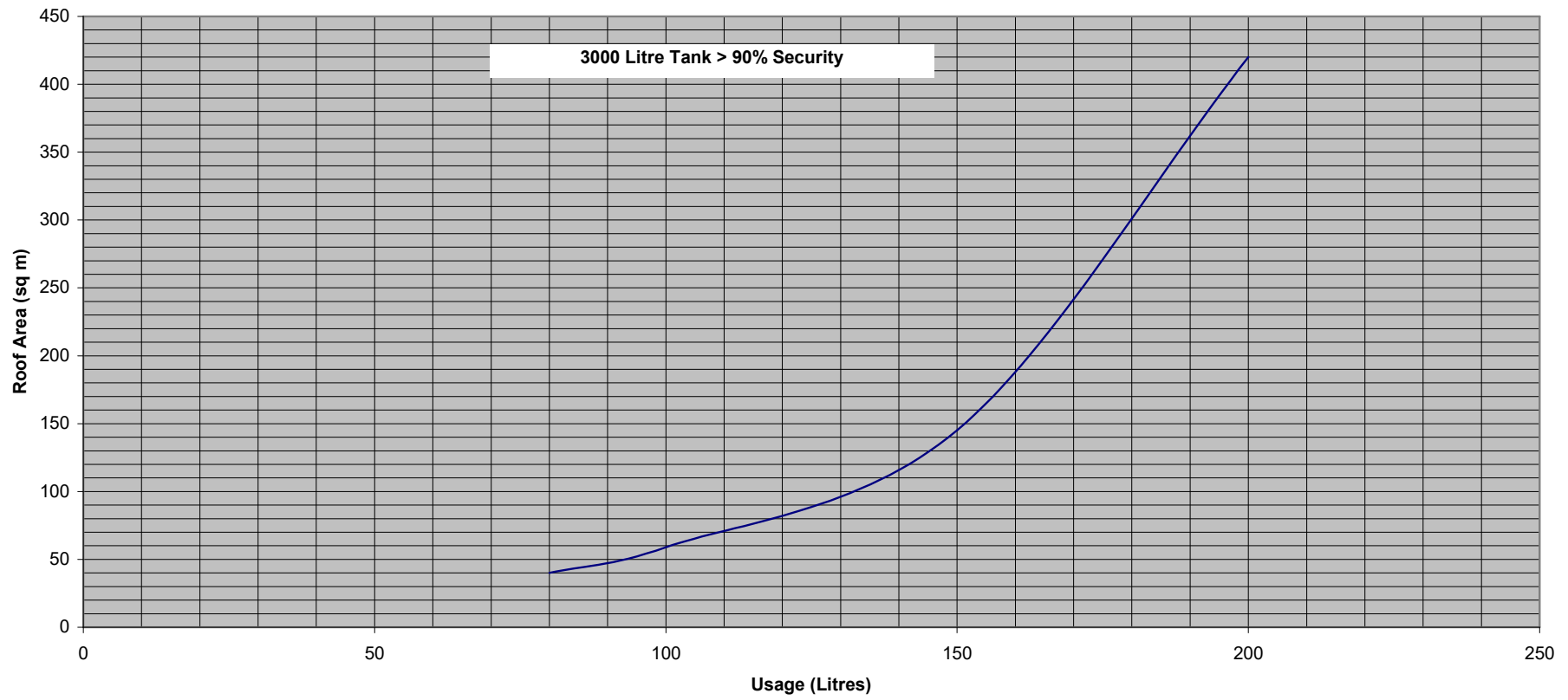






Chart 3

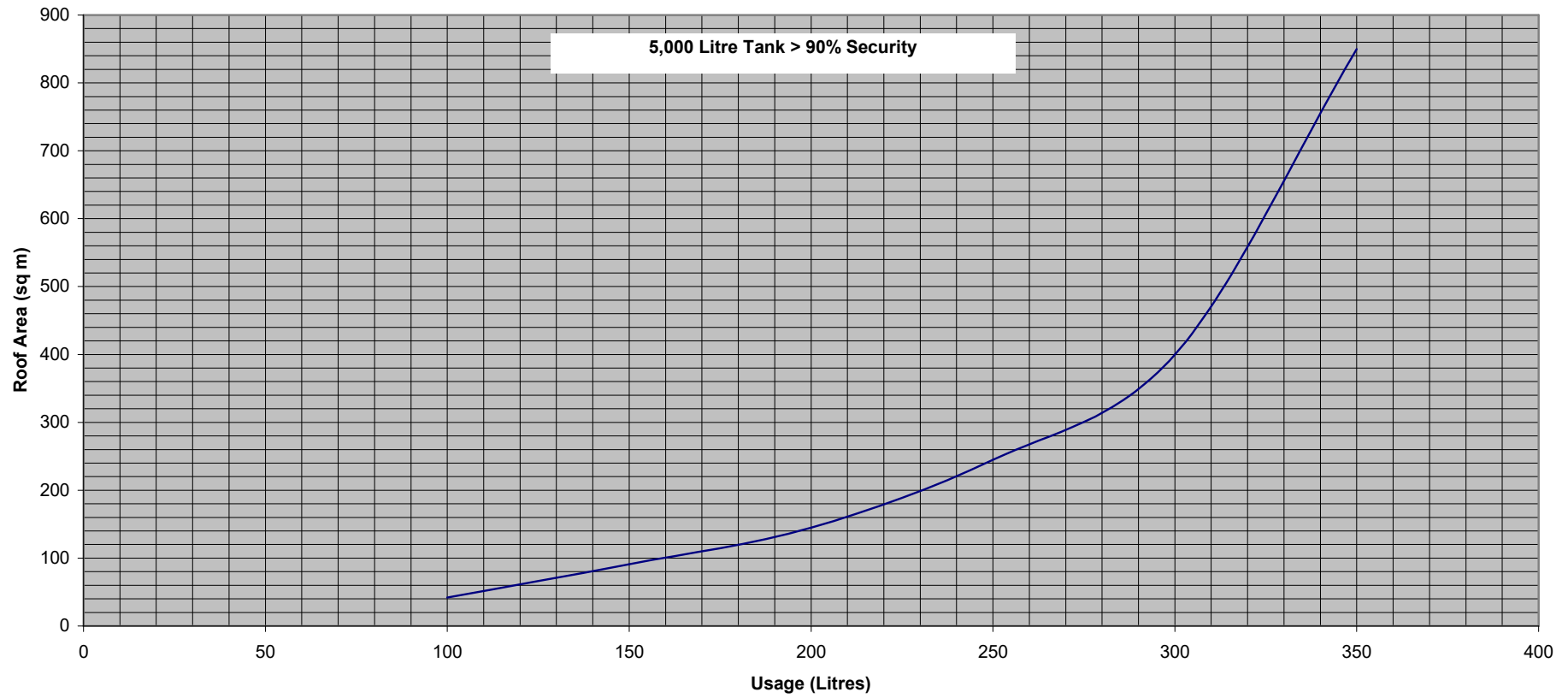




Chart 4

