



News Release

DIANE BEAMER

**MINISTER FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE, MINISTER FOR WESTERN SYDNEY
ASSISTANT MINISTER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE AND PLANNING
MEMBER FOR MULGOA**

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GOVERNMENT 'REGIONALISES' BASIX SUSTAINABILITY INDEX

The Carr Government has moved to better fit its new energy and water use standards (BASIX) to rural and regional NSW.

BASIX is a web-based design tool that measures water and energy use in new homes against the average for existing dwellings. BASIX was introduced to the Sydney metropolitan area last year, with home designs required to show a 40% reduction in water use and a 25% reduction in energy use compared to the average.

BASIX is due to be introduced into regional NSW and for apartments on July 1st.

Speaking in Leeton, NSW Assistant Planning Minister, Diane Beamer, said today that BASIX already took into account differing climatic and rainfall conditions in regional NSW.

"Last month I extended the time for public comment on the draft BASIX tool for regional NSW prior to its introduction," Ms Beamer said.

"Now, taking into account the submissions we received, and on further analysis of the Bureau of Meteorology's long term data across NSW, we have decided to vary the water targets according to location.

"The Carr Government recognises the contribution country people have already made to conserve water and adapt to the debilitating drought conditions'.

"Put simply, BASIX recognises the difference in rainfall and water retention in Bondi and Bourke and therefore they should be subject to different standards.

"If you're building a new home in Leeton, water efficient fixtures and a small rainwater tank can achieve a 20% water reduction. If the target was to remain at 40% you would be required to undertake more onerous and expensive water saving measures – that's not fair for people who are already using their water wisely.

"No one could argue the common sense approach - why require a person in Bourke where rainfall is around 355 millimetres per year to go to the same lengths as a person in Bondi where rainfall tops 1, 200 millimetres each year.

'BASIX is flexible. It's not a one-size fits all. That's why other states and territories are interested in adopting BASIX as their standard for good house design.

“Our briefing sessions, which continue around the state for the next few weeks, have already reached over two thousand representatives from regional councils and industry.

“Modifications to the water target means BASIX will work as well in the bush as it does in Sydney – the exact water targets and their locations will be released well in advance of the scheme’s implementation,” Ms Beamer said.

Ninety-percent of new residential development will be covered by the 40% water reduction target, and no new home built in NSW will use more water than the current state average.

Other enhancements to BASIX are also being considered, based on the feedback from the exhibition, including awarding points for connecting a rainwater tank to drinking water taps and hot water systems.

“The Government is responding to public comment and providing the best policy outcome possible for the community,” Ms Beamer said.

Since being introduced in Sydney, the impact of BASIX on new home designs has found:

- All homes monitored included rainwater tanks with an average size of 4,000 litres;
- All homes opted for efficient shower heads and tap fixtures;
- One in four opting for solar hot water systems;
- Over 40% of homes monitored included performance glass and double glazing;
- Eaves for shading windows have been built into virtually all of the homes monitored.

“When BASIX is fully implemented we expect that, over a ten year period, it will save around 9.5 million tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions – that’s the equivalent of taking 2.6 million cars off the road - and save 287 billion litres of water in NSW,” Ms Beamer said.

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