



Media Release– for immediate release 21 June 2017

## Rainwater Eases Housing Affordability Crisis

As the housing affordability crisis worsens Rainwater Harvesting has emerged as a form of Independent Water that makes living in our houses more affordable. The Independent Water Council calls on State and Federal government to widen the “affordability” discussion to the cost of a lifetime of living in houses as well as buying them.

Leisa Donlan, Independent Water Council member believes

“NSW is leading Australia in reducing the cost of living by using rainwater to help reduce household water bills”

NSW’s successful BASIX policies on rainwater management are a small additional cost for a new house but result in savings over a lifetime for the household and the government. Nett benefits to householders from energy and water targets are up to \$12,000 to 2050<sup>1</sup> from BASIX. Government savings are even larger because using Independent Water avoids the need for investment in billions of dollars of water infrastructure.<sup>2</sup>

The Independent Water Council is a newly established Coalition talking about the contribution that non-utility water makes to Australian water security. Independent Water includes rainwater, bore water, bottled water, greywater and stormwater.

Australia is the driest inhabited continent on earth and Independent Water makes a big contribution to how Australians use water. Over 2 million households or 5 million Australians use a rainwater tank. Rainwater provided an estimated 1900 billion litres or 8% of residential water consumption in 2013-14 (ABS Water Account).

**Independent Water Council – contact: Michael Smit 0418 372 489**

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<sup>1</sup> Nera economic consulting, 2010, BASIX Post-Implementation Cost-Benefit Analysis  
An Economic Evaluation of the State Environmental Planning Policy- Building Sustainability Index (BASIX) A Report for the Department of Planning

<sup>2</sup> Peter J Coombes, Michael Smit & Garth MacDonald (2016): Resolving boundary conditions in economic analysis of distributed solutions for water cycle management, Australian Journal of Water Resources, DOI: 10.1080/13241583.2016.1162762

**Company profile – Independent Water Council**

The Independent Water Council is a not for profit alliance of water industry stakeholders including the Association of Rotational Moulders Australasia (The Water Tank Group), Irrigation Australia, Rainwater Harvesting Association of Australia, Stormwater Australia and the Australian Wastewater Treatment Association.

The objective of the Council is to market the importance of independent water sources, appropriate resource management & policy development.

Independent Water Council website: [www.independentwatercouncil.org](http://www.independentwatercouncil.org)