

MEDIA RELEASE

Trial of smart meters puts water efficiency at a fingertip

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The NSW Government today announced a trial of water smart meters that could drive a new wave of water conservation in Sydney homes and save money for families by reducing their water bills.

Mr Costa said the new technology provides real-time data on water use at the end of your fingertips by monitoring water usage and detecting leaks to save drinking water.

Smart water meters are being installed in 468 homes in Sydney's North, including 160 with digital touch-screen displays, as part of the 16-month efficiency trial.

"This is putting water conservation at the touch of your fingertip," said Mr Costa.

"Real-time data will allow residents to identify where the most water is being used and pinpoint where they might benefit from installing a water efficient fixture or changing their behaviour.

"As part of a broader investigation into the best options for smart meters, Sydney Water will also be working with energy utilities on meters that may eventually combine water, energy and even gas use.

"160 households with interactive in-home displays will be able to generate a range of graphs comparing daily, weekly and monthly water use against average use or targeted use.

"The displays will also help householders identify leaks, which often result in unnecessary water loss and increased bills," he said.

Mr Costa said the evaluation of the trial will examine water efficient attitudes and behaviours, as well as actual water savings and the number and size of leaks detected.

"Sydneyiders have responded tremendously to the current range of water efficiency measures on offer," he said.

"One in four homes have either installed water efficient appliances, taken up a rainwater tank or washing machine rebate or had an evaluation of their garden and watering patterns.

"Smart meters have the potential to drive water efficient behaviour into the future. Households represent 70 percent of Sydney's water use, so targeting this area is core to increasing efficiency savings.

"In the energy sector, 'smart' metering has helped reduce customers' power use by between five and 20 per cent.

"This trial will allow Sydney Water to determine if the technology can have a similar impact on household water use."

By 2015, water efficiencies will save 24 percent of Sydney's overall water needs. For more information on home water efficiency, visit www.sydneywater.com.au.