

2022/23 Waterwise Verge Rebate Program FAQ

This document provides further information about frequently asked questions as part of the [2022/23 Waterwise Verge Rebate Program](#) run by the City.

This initiative is proudly co-funded by Water Corporation's [Waterwise Greening Scheme](#) and forms part of our ambition for the City to be a leading waterwise community.

What is a verge?

A verge is the strip of land between the road and the property boundary. Verges form important green spaces within our community and serve as an area of public shared space, necessary for access and services including utilities, crossovers, street trees and footpaths.

Verges traditionally consist of a combination of footpath, grass and a street tree, however the inclusion of low water use plants and a variety of approved alternative verge treatments has increased as residents move towards creating waterwise verge gardens.

What is a waterwise verge garden?

[Waterwise verge gardens](#) are attractive green spaces that are irrigation free and help to cool temperatures while creating wildlife friendly corridors through our streets.

Why create a waterwise verge?

The benefits of a well-designed, installed and maintained waterwise verge include:

- Water savings in the garden
- Require little maintenance, with occasional weeding, pruning, mulching and hand watering
- Create green and liveable communities
- Improve streetscape amenity and potentially increase property prices
- Contributes to healthy drainage
- Create a cooling effect and counteract the urban heat island effect
- Provide a habitat for local wildlife and promote biodiversity.

THE CITY OF JOONDALUP IS A PROUD
PLATINUM WATERWISE COUNCIL



Will a waterwise verge increase the value of my property?

Waterwise verges increase streetscape amenity and can potentially increase property prices.

How much water could I save by creating a waterwise verge?

By replacing irrigated lawn on your verge you could save up to approximately 20,000 – 40,000 litres per year depending on the size of your verge. The water savings will result in financial saving for you too. Learn more on saving water [here](#).

Who is eligible to apply?

To be eligible to apply you must be a local resident who can install a waterwise verge garden with native plants to replace lawn, synthetic lawn, hardscape treatments or verges with no treatments at all (e.g. bare soil). Proof of residence will be required at the time of application.



Can renters participate in the program?

If you are renting in the City, please liaise with your landlord. Evidence of **written permission** needs to be included as part of the Expression of Interest form.

How to apply?

To apply for the waterwise verge rebate program, complete the online [Expression of Interest](#). The City will review and respond to applications within 21 days.

Can someone assist with my application?

If you don't have access to a computer or smart device, or need some assistance with your application, you can contact the City on **9400 4271** for assistance.

Can I apply if I have already created a waterwise verge?

The program will not support verge installations that take place prior to the date of application approval but we encourage you to apply for the City's Waterwise Verge Competition when it commences.

Can I apply if I live in a Housing Opportunity Area?

You can apply if you live in a Housing Opportunity Area (HOA) and are responsible for maintaining a verge. Please read the City's [Street Verge Guidelines](#) for specific requirements for HOA's.

What are my responsibilities if I participate?

Residents participating in the Waterwise Verge Rebate Program must comply with the following Terms and Conditions:

- Upload 'before' photos of your verge prior to the makeover with your Expression of Interest.
- Prepare your verge for the new installation, including removing/spraying existing grass etc.
- Inform the City of your installation date/timeframe. Vouchers must be used by the specified valid dates and works on your verge must be completed by **12 June 2023**. Voucher monies not spent by the valid date is forfeit.
- Utilise plant species that are native to Western Australia.
- Plant seeds and seedlings supplied by the City.
- Provide 'after' photos of your waterwise verge garden by **16 June 2023**.
- Provide a Program Report to the City by **16 June 2023**. A template will be provided in **April 2023**.
- Maintain the verge after installation. Please note that irrigation (if required) and weed control supplies/materials are not provided by the City.
- Give permission for the City to use before and after verge photos in City social media and publications to promote the Waterwise Verge Rebate Program.
- Renters must seek written permission from landlords before commencing any works
- Ensure that your verge is compliant with the City's *Local Government and Public Property Local Law 2014* and the City's *Street Verge Guidelines*.

What will I receive if I participate in the program?

Successful participants will receive the following:

- Handy tips on maintaining a waterwise verge garden
- Design advice where requested
- Plant giveaway pack of 20 unique, attractive and waterwise native plant species suited to your local verge conditions
- A voucher for \$250.00 to spend at your choice of Dawsons Garden World (Joondalup), Wildflower Society of WA Northern Suburbs Branch Nursery at Landsdale Farm, Darch or Zanthorrea Nursery, Maida Vale
- A packet of everlasting seeds.

Through supporting initiatives, you can also receive a [mulch voucher](#) and apply for a [free street tree](#).

Where can I see a waterwise verge garden?

You can view demonstration waterwise verge gardens at the following locations:

- Carina Loop, Ocean Reef
- Currambine Community Centre, Currambine
- Duncraig Library, Duncraig.

What approvals do I need before I start my project?

Before planning your verge, read the City's [Street Verge Guidelines](#) and the Water Corporation's [Waterwise verge best practice guidelines](#).

If you live in a strata property, you'll need to get joint approval, in writing, from strata owners and managers before starting.

It's also essential to confirm any underground services (such as water, electrical, gas and telecommunication services) prior to starting, to ensure no assets are damaged. Visit the [Before You Dig Australia](#) website for more information.

How to design a waterwise verge?

Find inspiration by looking through garden websites or magazines, or visit a waterwise demonstration garden (see 'Where can I see a waterwise verge garden' above).

Other resources:

- Check out these [waterwise verge designs](#) and [garden designs](#) to help you get started.
- Find [waterwise specialists](#) to help you design your verge.
- Watch this [video](#) for tips on how to makeover your verge.

Key steps to designing a waterwise verge include:

1. Understand the City's [Street Verge Guidelines](#) and requirements
2. Call 1100 (Before You Dig Australia) or enquire [online](#) for safety and protection of underground utilities.
3. Design your verge (we recommend you include a [free street tree](#))

4. Prepare your verge – remove lawn and weeds/ synthetic lawn/pavement, and improve your soil as needed to meet your [Street Verge Guidelines](#) design requirements.
5. Consider selection, placement and aesthetics of your waterwise plant species that are identified on the [Water Corporation website](#) in your waterwise verge garden designs. It is preferred your verge gardens are planted with native (Western) Australian plant species.
6. Apply mulch.
7. Regular watering after planting is important until the plants have established. Considering access to a temporary watering or irrigation system to help plants establish is recommended.

For more support to design your waterwise verge, visit the Water Corporation's [How to create a waterwise verge: guidance for householders](#).

What waterwise plants can I select from?

Locally native waterwise plant species are the most appropriate for verge gardens as they can survive our hot dry summers with little to no additional watering.

The City encourages the use of locally native plants and if you participate in the program you will be given a plant pack with 20 locally native species, with a few exceptions of WA native species.

Find out more about plant selection through our [Growing Locals](#) brochures, Water Corporation's [Waterwise plants directory](#) and [ReWild Perth](#) that helps you find locally native plants for your suburb. You can also visit your local [Waterwise Garden Centre](#).

Make sure you do not select plants that are prickly, poisonous to both humans and animals or that may cause allergic reactions.

All verge garden plants need to be maintained below 600mm in height. Many locally native plants can be pruned successfully, and alternatively there are also many 'prostrate' or 'dwarf' cultivators of popular larger locally native plant species.

If you are considering planting a tree, refer to the City's [Street Tree Planting](#) program. The Water Corporation have a list of [waterwise trees suitable for verge planting](#) as they have non-invasive roots to minimise damage to underground pipes.

Can I plant a street tree as part of the Waterwise Verge Rebate Program?

Residents can apply for the City to supply and plant free street trees on residential verges via this [form](#).

Alternatively, residents can apply to plant their own tree(s) on the verge with approval from the City.

For both options, the City has a preferred tree list in the [Tree Management Guidelines](#) from which residents may choose a tree (refer to page 10 residential verges), in consultation with the City. This helps ensure an appropriate tree species is selected for each location and we encourage locally native trees to be selected where possible.

Residents can also request maintenance on their street tree via this [form](#).

How do I prepare my verge for waterwise planting?

Removal of unwanted lawn and weeds is crucial to the success of a waterwise verge garden to prevent competition with new plants.

Some perennial grasses such as buffalo and kikuyu can be removed manually, but couch grass typically needs to be handled with herbicide spraying. When using herbicides, always apply as directed on the pack, including follow up treatments as required, or consider hiring a licensed contractor. For further information, read more about [taking action on weeds](#).

If you elect to use solarisation to help remove your grass, ensure a UV resistant black plastic is selected to prevent the sun breaking the plastic into micro-plastics.

If you're including local native species, it's a good idea to apply a soil wetting agent during establishment to increase the soil's 'wettability', allowing water to penetrate deep into the root zone. The best time to plant is late autumn/early winter, as rainfall through the cooler winter months will help to establish your new garden.

Once you've finished planting, apply a 5-10cm thick even layer of coarse mulch, making sure mulch is kept clear from the base of all new plants and trees. Get more tips on [improving your soil](#).

Does my waterwise verge need irrigation and watering?

We recommend establishing a [rain garden](#) that does not require irrigation. If your waterwise verge needs a little irrigation help, contact your local [waterwise specialist](#) for advice on which system will best suit your plants' needs.

While establishing your verge garden, you may be able to [apply for a watering exemption](#).

How do I maintain my new waterwise verge?

Native waterwise verge gardens should only require occasional weeding and pruning. Check mulch every few months and top up as necessary to maintain a 5-10cm even layer across all planting areas.

All maintenance to street trees must be carried out by the City, including pruning. Residents can also request maintenance on their street tree via this [form](#). Contact the City if you think your verge tree needs attention on info@joondalup.wa.gov.au or **9400 4255**.

Can I grow food on my verge?

You can grow food on your verge however you will not be eligible to participate in the City's Waterwise Verge Rebate Program.

Can I include structures on my verge such as bird baths and sculptures?

The installation of built structures, temporary or permanent, such as bird baths, sculptures, mailboxes, planter boxes or retaining walls is not permitted on the verge.

Can I plant up to the edge of my verge?

Where there is no footpath to the verge, a 1.5m wide pedestrian refuge zone must be provided from the back of the road kerb. This area can be mulch or groundcovers. An example of a locally native ground cover is [Prostrate Thryptomene](#). Where there is a footpath, this requirement does not exist, and your verge can include waterwise plants that do not exceed 600mm in height. Refer to the [Street Verge Guidelines](#) for more information.

How do I get free mulch?

Residents can download the annual waste guide online and [request mulch vouchers](#). For further information, read the [2022/23 Waste Services Guide and Tipping Vouchers FAQ](#).

Another great resource is [MulchNet.com](#).

Can I get the free native plants without participating in the program?

The free native plant packs are only available for participants in the program.

Where do I collect my plants from?

The City will notify the participants of the date, time and location of where they can collect their plant giveaway packs and everlasting seeds once they are ready via email or phone call. The plants are to be collected in **May 2023**.

Where are the closest waterwise garden centres and nurseries?

Here are a few nurseries to consider visiting:

- [Dawsons Garden World](#) at 179 Winton Road, Joondalup*
- [Zanthorea Nursery](#) at 155 Watsonia Road, Maida Vale*
- [WA Wildflower Society Nursery](#) - Northern Suburbs Branch, Landsdale Farm, Darch*
- Miaflora Garden Centre, Inglewood
- Guildford Garden Centre, Guildford
- Local Bunnings stores have some native tube stock. Use the City's [Growing locals](#) brochure for your location to find suitable species
- [Trillion Trees Australia Nursery](#), Hazelmere
- [Waldecks](#), Stirling
- [Australian Native Nursery](#), 141 King Rd, Oakford.

*These nurseries will be partnering with the City as part of the program.

Also check out the WA Wildflower Society [list of nurseries](#) or the Water Corporation's [find a waterwise garden centre](#).

Where can I get further information?

For further information on the City's 2022/23 Waterwise Verge Rebate Program, contact the City on enviro@joondalup.wa.gov.au or call **9400 4271**.

Waterwise Verge Rebate Program Application Timeline

