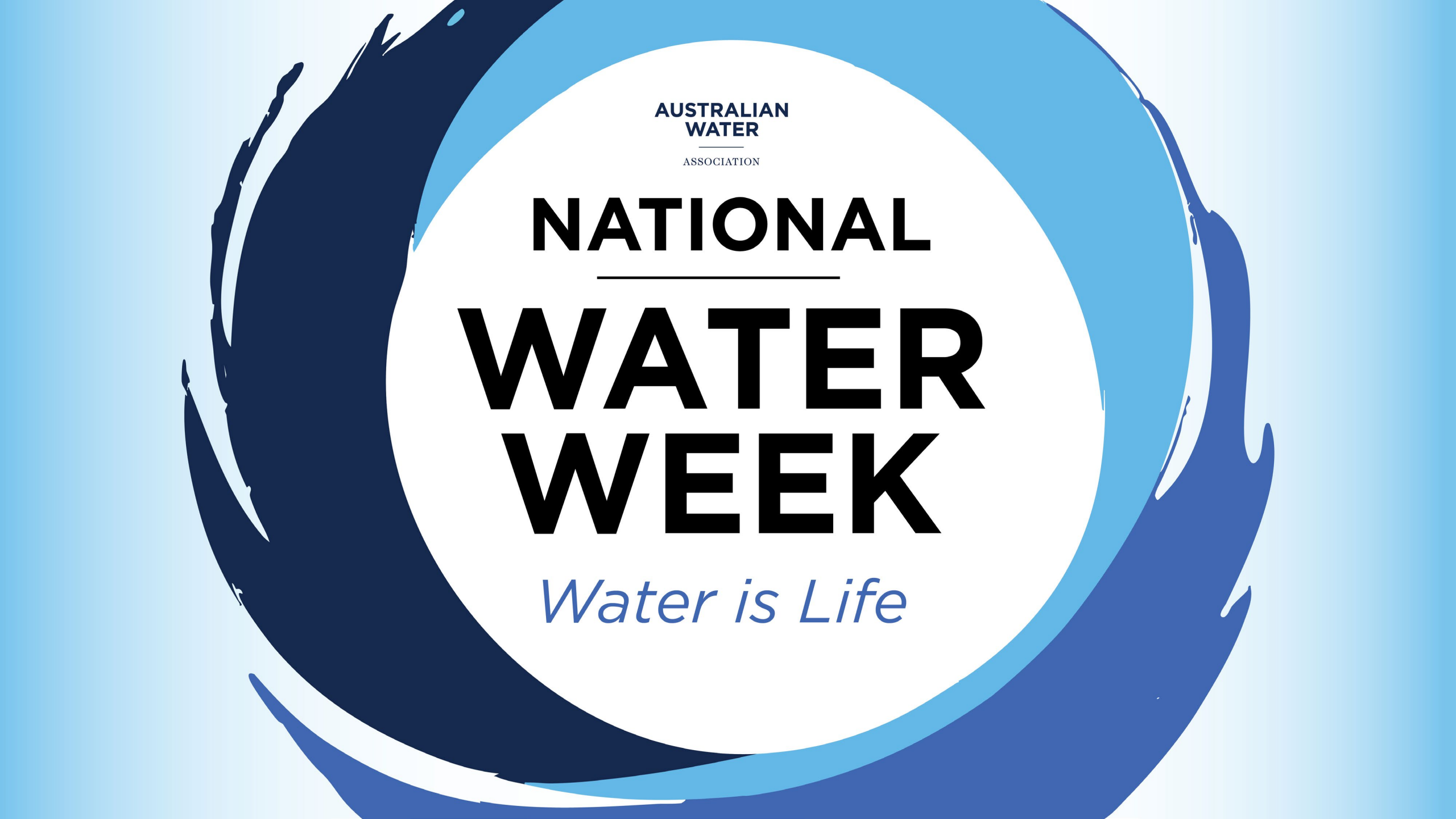


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**WATER
WEEK**

Water is Life



National Water Week Quiz 2026

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)

Questions

More challenging questions on systems, infrastructure, equity, trade-offs, circular economy and future water choices.

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



A car is washed in a driveway and soapy water runs into the gutter. Which system is affected first?

- A. Drinking water supply
- B. Stormwater
- C. Sewerage
- D. Groundwater recharge by default

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Which sequence best describes a typical drinking water journey?

- A. Catchment/source → storage → treatment → pipes → tap
- B. Toilet → sewer → treatment → tap
- C. Street gutter → wetland → kitchen sink
- D. Ocean → pool → stormwater → tap

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Which option best explains why sewerage systems are a public health achievement?

- A. They remove the need for handwashing
- B. They make tap water taste better
- C. They keep wastewater away from people and allow it to be treated safely
- D. They turn all waste into drinking water immediately

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



What is the main job of the S-bend or water seal in a sink or toilet?

- A. To stop sewer gases and smells entering the room
- B. To make wastewater flow uphill
- C. To filter microplastics
- D. To disinfect water

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



A council can build a wetland that reduces flooding, improves water quality and cools a park, but it costs more upfront than a basic drain upgrade. What is the central trade-off?

- A. Upfront cost versus multiple long-term benefits
- B. Whether reducing flood risk should take priority over improving water quality
- C. Whether the project should be delayed until all future benefits can be measured precisely
- D. Whether to choose a more complex solution with several benefits or a simpler solution focused on one main purpose

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Why can stormwater be harder to govern than drinking water or sewerage?

- A. Stormwater only runs through a council water meter
- B. Stormwater never needs maintenance
- C. Rain is illegal to manage
- D. Responsibilities can be split across councils, utilities, roads, parks, planning and waterways

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Which statement about recycled water is most accurate?

- A. It is always unsafe because of where it started
- B. Different treatment levels can make recycled water suitable for different uses
- C. It can only be used for drinking water
- D. It needs no monitoring once treated

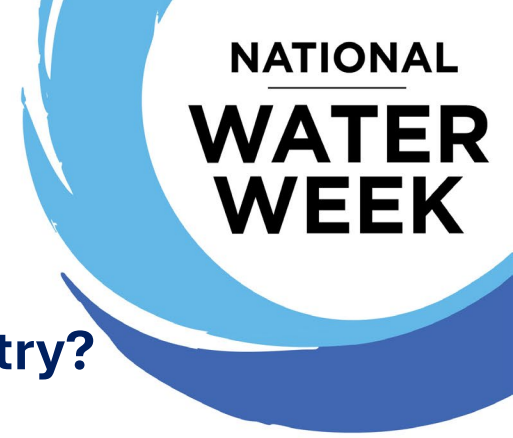
Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



In water planning, why is “cheapest today” not always the best decision?

- A. Delaying investment can keep bills lower now, even if it transfers more risk and cost to future users
- B. A more expensive option will always deliver better environmental and community outcomes
- C. A lower-cost option may reduce immediate spending but create higher maintenance, replacement or failure costs later
- D. Choosing the lowest-cost option is best when it still meets service, safety and resilience requirements

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Which approach best supports respectful learning about water and Country?

- A. Invite an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander speaker after the unit has been designed, so they can confirm the content is appropriate
- B. Use a well-regarded national resource so every class receives the same information about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander water knowledge
- C. Each student should research cultural water knowledge independently, then compare what they find from different online sources
- D. Work with local Traditional Owners or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators, use approved resources, and follow guidance about permission and attribution

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Which option is the weakest example of water literacy?

- A. Understanding stormwater and sewerage are different systems
- B. Knowing water bills help fund infrastructure and services
- C. Assuming water decisions are only technical and do not need community understanding
- D. Knowing where local water comes from and where wastewater goes

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Which water source is usually produced by removing salts from seawater or brackish water?

- A. Desalinated water
- B. Stormwater
- C. Wastewater before treatment
- D. Surface runoff

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Which “water and net zero” connection is most accurate?

- A. Water has no relationship with energy
- B. Water services use energy, and some wastewater processes can recover resources or energy
- C. Net zero only matters in electricity, not water
- D. Wastewater cannot ever be part of a circular economy

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Why can regional, rural and remote communities face different water service challenges?

- A. Many communities rely entirely on rainwater tanks, so water services are usually simpler
- B. Smaller customer bases, long distances, workforce shortages and local water conditions can make services harder to fund and maintain
- C. Fewer people means water infrastructure is cheaper and easier to manage
- D. Natural water sources in remote areas are usually cleaner and need less treatment

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Which of these currently consumes the most water in Australia?

- A. Manufacturing
- B. Data centres and digital technology
- C. Mining
- D. Agriculture

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)

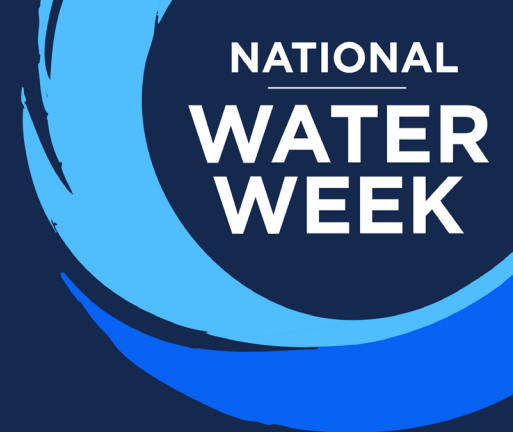


A future suburb is being planned. Which choice best shows integrated water management?

- A. Managing water only inside property boundaries
- B. Building houses first and planning pipe location around the buildings
- C. Planning drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, green space, roads, housing and climate resilience together
- D. Using larger pipes for every problem, so smaller pipes can be added down the track

Secondary (Years 7 to 12) Answers

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)

The logo for National Water Week, featuring the words "NATIONAL WATER WEEK" in white capital letters. "NATIONAL" is on the top line, "WATER" is on the middle line, and "WEEK" is on the bottom line. The text is set against a dark blue circular background with a lighter blue wave-like border.

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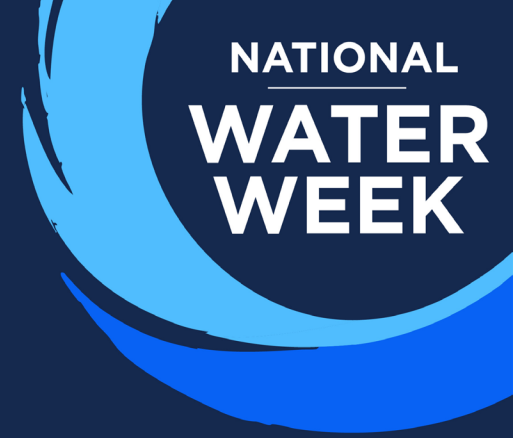
Answer: B. Stormwater

Driveways and street gutters often connect to stormwater systems. Soapy water can enter local waterways if it is not managed properly.

Discuss:

What behaviours rely on people knowing where stormwater goes?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



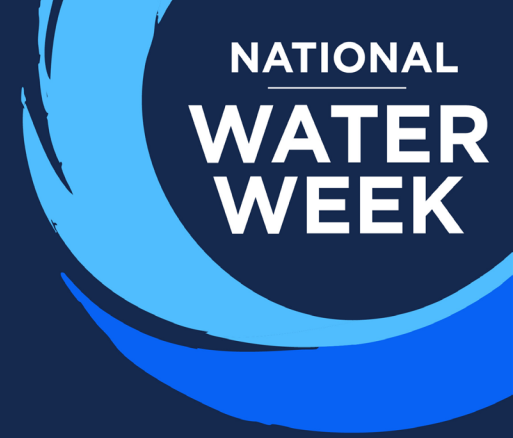
Answer: A. Catchment/source → storage → treatment → pipes → tap

Drinking water usually moves from a source or catchment into storage, is treated, and then distributed through pipes to customers.

Discuss:

How might the sequence differ in communities that use groundwater, desalination or rainwater?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



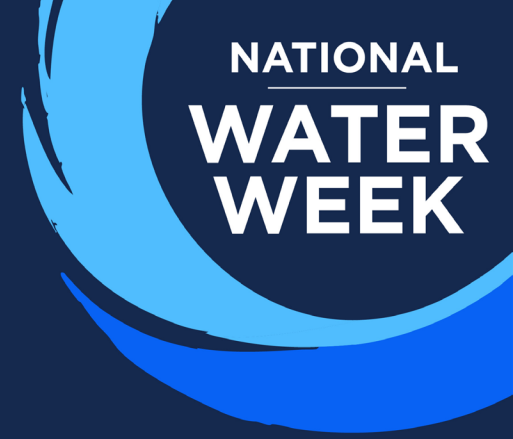
Answer: C. They keep wastewater away from people and allow it to be treated safely

Safe sewerage and wastewater treatment are critical for public health, environmental protection and liveability.

Discuss:

Why are sewerage systems often “invisible” until something goes wrong?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Answer: A. To stop sewer gases and smells entering the room

The water seal blocks gases from the sewer entering buildings. It is a small design feature with a big public health role.

Discuss:

What other small infrastructure details protect health?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)

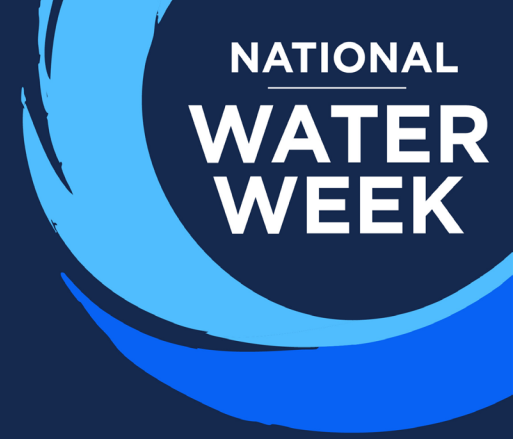
Answer: A. Upfront cost versus multiple long-term benefits

The decision involves comparing a lower-cost, single-purpose solution with a more expensive option that may deliver several long-term benefits. These can include flood protection, cleaner waterways, urban cooling, biodiversity and improved public space.

Discuss:

How should decision-makers compare benefits that are difficult to measure in dollars?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



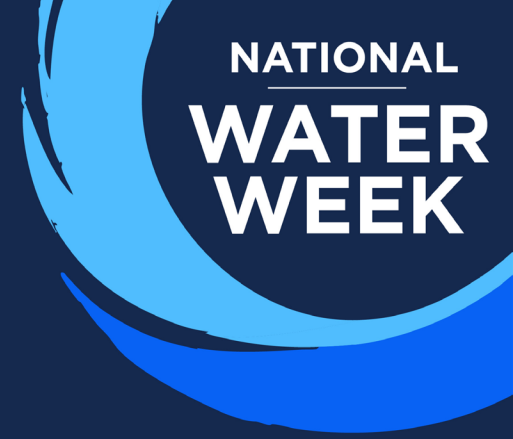
Answer: D. Responsibilities can be split across councils, utilities, roads, parks, planning and waterways

Stormwater can involve fragmented responsibilities and co-benefits that are hard to price, such as cooling, amenity and waterway health.

Discuss:

What happens when nobody clearly owns a problem?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Answer: B. Different treatment levels can make recycled water suitable for different uses

Recycled water can be treated for uses such as irrigation, industry, environmental flows, toilet flushing, or, with advanced treatment and strong regulation, drinking water in some systems.

Discuss:

Why can community trust matter as much as technology?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)

Answer: C. A lower-cost option may reduce immediate spending but create higher maintenance, replacement or failure costs later

Short-term affordability can conflict with long-term resilience, maintenance and service reliability. This is a key trade-off in water governance. A and B are also valid considerations, however, C most directly explains why focusing only on today's price can lead to poorer long-term value.

Discuss:

What information would you need to compare the total cost and risk of each option over time?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)

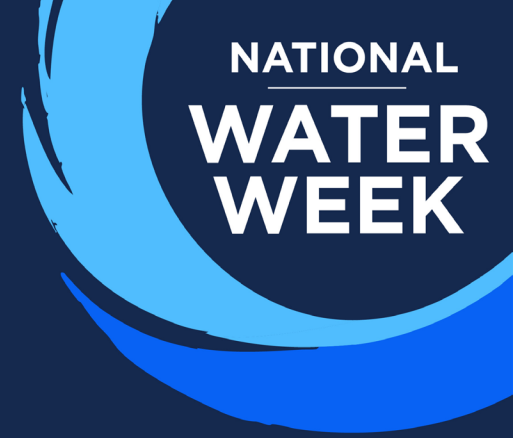
Answer: D. Work with local Traditional Owners or Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators, use approved resources, and follow guidance about permission and attribution

Water knowledge is connected to particular Countries, communities, cultures and responsibilities. Respectful learning is locally guided and considers permission, attribution and involvement from the beginning.

Discuss:

What is the difference between including First Peoples' perspectives and co-designing learning with local knowledge holders?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



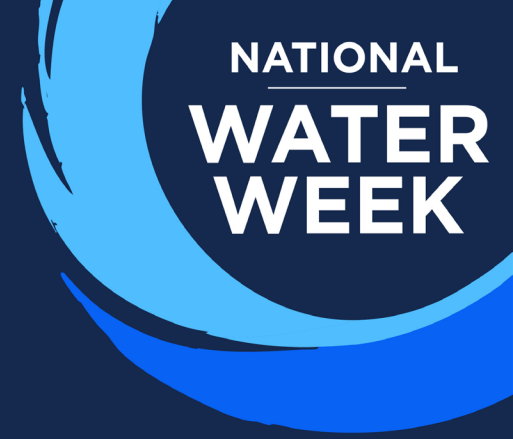
Answer: C. Assuming water decisions are only technical and do not need community understanding

Water literacy helps communities understand services, risks, costs, values and trade-offs, enabling more informed participation.

Discuss:

What should everyone know about their local water system?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



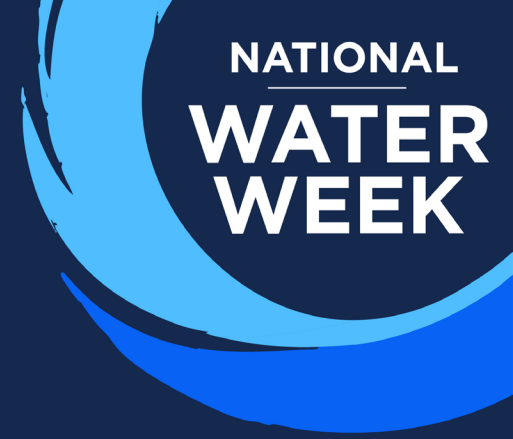
Answer: A. Desalinated water

Desalination can provide climate-independent water supply, but it requires energy, infrastructure, cost and careful management of environmental impacts.

Discuss:

What trade-offs might come with desalination?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Answer: B. Water services use energy, and some wastewater processes can recover resources or energy

Water connects to energy use, emissions, circular economy, resource recovery, treatment technology and infrastructure choices.

Discuss:

Where might a school save both water and energy?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)

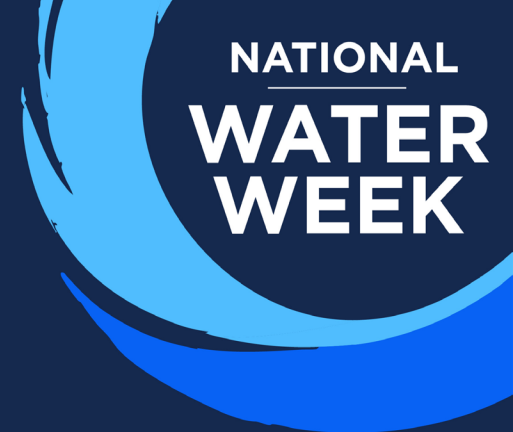
Answer: A. Smaller customer bases, distance, workforce capacity and local conditions can make services harder to fund and maintain

Regional, rural and remote communities can face higher costs per customer, greater transport and maintenance challenges, workforce constraints, ageing infrastructure and highly variable local water conditions.

Discuss:

What might fair water service delivery look like when communities have very different needs?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)

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Answer: D. Agriculture

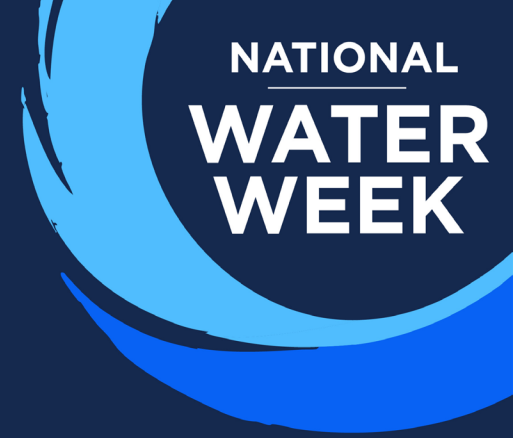
Agriculture is currently Australia's largest consumptive water user, accounting for about 68% of national water consumption in 2023–24. Data centres are not yet reported as a separate category in Australia's national water accounts, so they cannot be directly ranked against these sectors. However, data centres can be significant water users, particularly where water-based cooling systems are used. They also use electricity, which can have its own indirect water footprint.

Water is also essential to mining, manufacturing, energy production, housing and communities. Even when a new development is not part of Australia's largest water-using sector, it may still place substantial pressure on local water supplies and infrastructure.

Discuss:

Why should the water needs of a new development be considered before it is approved?

Secondary (Years 7 to 12)



Answer: C. Planning drinking water, wastewater, stormwater, green space, roads, housing and climate resilience together

Integrated water management looks across systems and sectors. It can deliver co-benefits such as liveability, cooling, flood mitigation, waterway health and secure supply.

Discuss:

What would you include in a water-smart suburb?

THANK YOU FOR TAKING PART!

Thank you for bringing people together to test your water knowledge and celebrate National Water Week.

Held annually in October, National Water Week encourages people across Australia to learn more about the value of water and the systems, people and places that help keep it safe, reliable and sustainable.

The quiz may be finished, but the conversation does not have to stop. Keep exploring where your water comes from, where it goes after you use it, and how water connects our communities, environment, culture and economy.

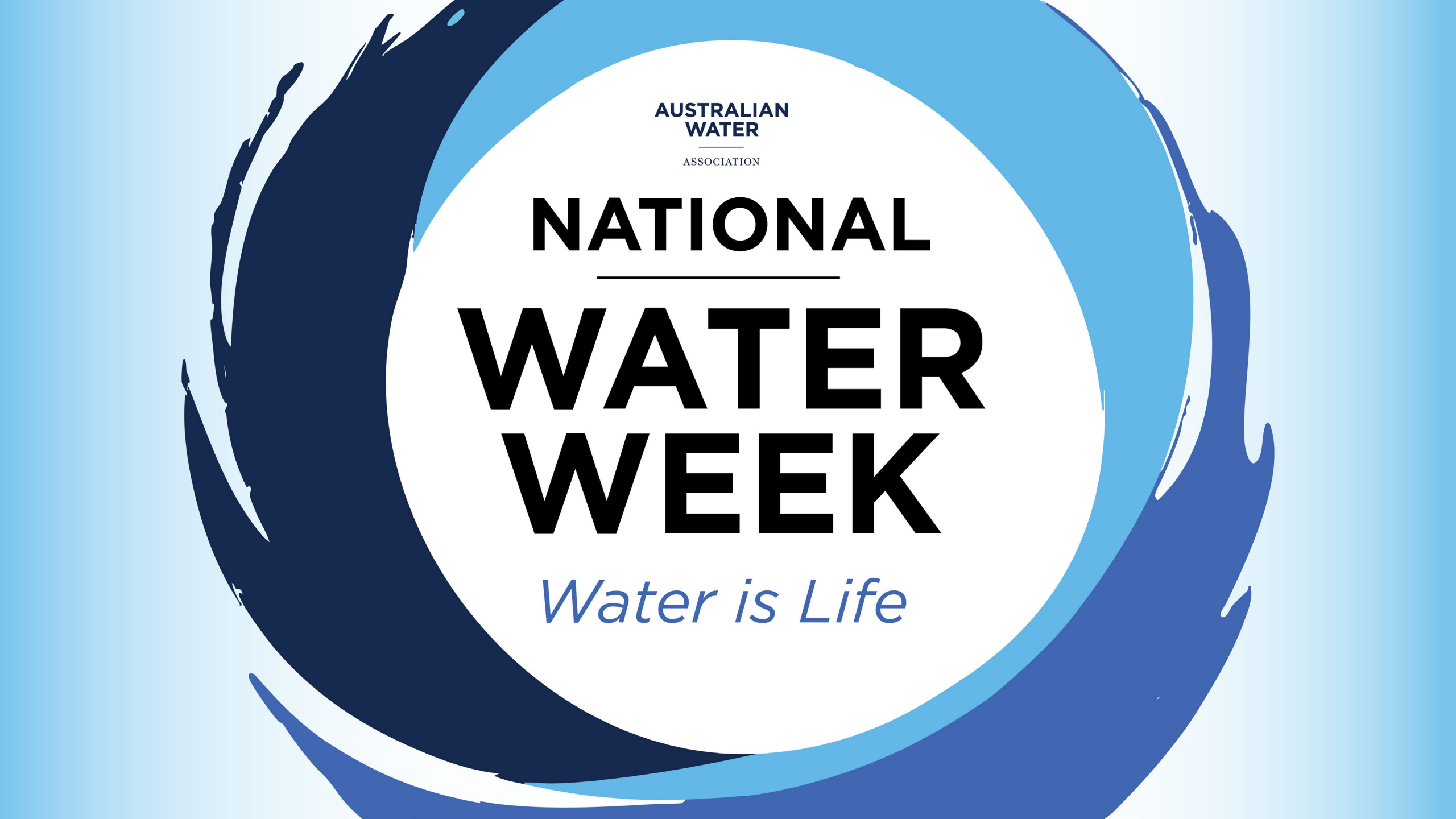
Discover more National Water Week activities and resources at:

<https://www.nationalwaterweek.org>

WE'D LOVE YOUR FEEDBACK

Tell us how you used the quiz, what your group learned and which questions prompted the most discussion.

Email: nationalwaterweek@awa.asn.au

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