



City of Greater Bendigo

Drinking water fountain installation guide

Introduction

The City of Greater Bendigo has a strong commitment to improve the health and wellbeing of residents and this guide has been produced to assist staff when they are considering installing public drinking water fountains within the municipality.

Water is an essential nutrient for most bodily functions and the provision of and access to free drinking water is important to reduce the consumption of sugar sweetened beverages and reduce obesity and diabetes.

Providing drinking water fountains with bottle refill stations also reduces the need for single use plastics and helps to protect the environment.

The benefits

1. Providing access to safe drinking water aligns with the City's Municipal Health and Wellbeing Plan through encouraging the consumption of water instead of sugar sweetened beverages.
2. Providing free tap water encourages people to drink more water. Free tap water should be accessible, appealing and available in key settings where people live, learn, work and play.
3. The provision of drinking water fountains aligns with the Heatwave Planning Guide for local governments.
4. Providing drinking water fountains with bottle refill stations reduces landfill and is good for the environment.
5. Drinking water fountains provide an opportunity to deliver a consistent health promotion message to the community. The City recommends the health promotion message, 'Be Smart Choose Water'.

Water Refill Stations

Research has shown that water refill stations are the preferred way of accessing drinking water. They are more popular than bubblers for the following reasons:

1. Water bottle refill stations are perceived as cleaner and more hygienic than bubblers.
2. Water bottle refill stations are preferred by adults as they are less likely to have water spray on their clothes and face.
3. Filling a water bottle allows water to be consumed between water refill stations and at other times.
4. More people are now carrying reusable drinking water bottles.

Drinking Water and Refill Station inclusions

- All drinking water fountains must have vertical bottle refill stations as these are easier for the whole community to use, including children, the elderly and people with a disability
- Flow metre gauges must be installed in vertical water refill stations to monitor usage as the evaluation of drinking water fountain usage is critical for mapping and planning future installations
- Consider including a dog bowl in the design of the drinking water fountain in parks and open spaces where dogs are encouraged

Where to locate a drinking water fountain

Research shows that drinking water fountains must be installed in prominent areas, with high foot traffic. Installation of drinking water fountains within the City should comply with at least two of the following requirements:

- high pedestrian traffic areas, such as playgrounds
- open spaces such as sport and recreation reserves
- active recreation locations such as cycling and walking paths
- low socio economic high use areas
- open spaces where there are picnic tables/BBQ facilities

Drinking water fountain suppliers

The selection of the model or brand of drinking water fountain should consider the following:

- consistency for the community, aim to have one or two fountain models across the municipality
- the accessibility of the fountain design, all drinking water fountains must be fully accessible
- the availability of a vertical bottle refill station that is accessible
- maintenance requirements, installation of high quality fountains to minimise malfunctions
- all drinking water fountains installed should NOT contain a water filter system
- ability to record the usage through a flow metre gauge

Heritage considerations

In locations where heritage considerations are applicable (eg. Rosalind Park), those considerations will override the contents of this guide.

Examples

CIVIQ – Drinking water fountains with vertical bottle refill stations such as Aquafil FlexiFountain 1500.

www.civiq.com.au

Meet PAT – Drinking water fountains provided by Coliban Water for the City to install and maintain in high use public areas.

www.meetpat.com.au

References

VicHealth 2016, Provision of drinking water fountains in public areas. A local government action guide.

www.vichealth.vic.gov.au

Department of Health 2012, Heatwave Planning Guide.
www.health.vic.gov.au

VicHealth 2009, Encouraging healthy food and drink choices. An overview for local governments.

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