

## **Every Drop Counts – Saving Water at Monash Michelle Giovas, Monash University**

Victoria's six-year drought has resulted in a significant drop in water supply levels across the State. The need to conserve water has been driven by this drop in storage supply and the growing recognition that water is indeed a precious and limited resource.

Water conservation is a major objective of the University's Environmental Policy and is being achieved in line with Monash's progress towards sustainable development and operation. In 2001 Monash University successfully implemented the first synthetic turf hockey field water recycling system in Australia. In 2002 –2003 Monash has continued and expanded its program to conserve water by reducing mains water consumption and further developing its recycling programs.

Monash has reduced water consumption by firstly identifying and assessing where significant water use or process areas are and then tackling these as a priority. The Monash Water Conservation Committee analysed seasonal water use patterns and to identified where improved water management was needed. These areas were grounds watering in summer, and services (kitchen, toilet and shower or ablution) in winter.

Improving control of grounds watering has been achieved by installation of the Micromet automatic irrigation system. Service water has been reduced by conducting water audits of buildings with greatest visitor and service contact, and the subsequent fitting of water efficient valves to plumbing fixtures as recommended.

Importantly Monash staff have developed new and innovative ways of recycling wastewater and utilising storm water including;

- Utilising storm water and irrigation run-off to water a sports oval,
- Reuse of swimming pool filter backwash for toilet flush, and
- Recycling of the main boiler house pump cooling water.

These projects have cost \$123,000, but will conservatively save more than 72370KL/annum of water or about 16% of the University's current water usage. A saving of a \$84,000 per annum in water delivery and disposal costs