

ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW FACT SHEET

<p>Overview</p>	<p>Today, as it was in the 1850s, water is at the forefront of the national psyche. Sovereign Hill sees itself as a conduit through which the story of water can be told, linking the lessons of the past with the opportunities for a more sustainable future. In depicting the past, water has become integral to Sovereign Hill's function. From maintaining the heritage gardens to running the historic boilers in the Steam Operations area, the procedural requirements have placed a heavy demand on mains water. The increasing pressure caused by drought conditions has led Sovereign Hill to reduce their reliance on this resource.</p> <p>To facilitate the water strategy, the Museum has gained financial support from State and Federal Governments. The Federal Government's Community Water Grants scheme has enabled Sovereign Hill to channel rainwater from existing rooflines into a series of tanks joined by a gravity fed underground water spine. This currently satisfies the needs of the notable heritage gardens. The grant delivered by the Victorian Government's Smart Water Fund will be used by the Steam Operations to implement technologies such as a reverse osmosis system and gross pollutant separator that will reduce their reliance on mains water and water treatment chemicals.</p>
<p>Gardening Strategies</p>	<p>By clustering valuable plants in specific gardens and removing non-essential plants, Sovereign Hill has prioritized its water requirements. Mulching and a focus on improving soil condition have also reduced their reliance on water as an input.</p>
<p>Adapting the Old</p>	<p>Water Collection Tanks</p> <p>Until 1862, no permanent water catchment existed in Ballarat. During the latter part of the 1850s, many houses had water tanks, which collected rainwater from guttering. Water butts (barrels) were also used to collect water.</p> <p>To reduce Sovereign Hill's reliance on mains water, they installed 13 water tanks with total storage capability 1,100,150 liters. Water stored can be used for the heritage gardens, steam operations and horses.</p> <p>With supplementary funding from the Federal Government's Community Water Grants scheme, Sovereign Hill harnessed rainwater catchment from existing rooflines. This reclaimed water is now able to be rechanneled into a series of tanks</p>

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	<p>joined by a gravity-fed underground water pipe. The system has the capacity to hold approximately one million litres of water.</p>
<p>Embracing the New</p>	<p>With funding from the Victorian Government's Smart Water Fund, Sovereign Hill has embraced new technologies as part of its water-saving strategies.</p> <p>Sediment Separation</p> <p>Soon, nothing will go to waste! Storm water from Sovereign Hill's road and footpaths will no longer be lost to drains outside Sovereign Hill or through evaporation. This precious water will be channeled into drains that lead to a gross pollutant trap (GPT) designed by CDS. This trap will separate and remove pollutants like mud, gravel and rubbish from the water so it can be stored for further use.</p> <p>Reverse Osmosis</p> <p>Water used in the Sovereign Hill stream operations need to be relatively free of impurities such as calcium, magnesium and silica. If these impurities are left to build up in the boilers, they form a hard scale, which decreases the efficiency of the boilers and increases the volume of water required to operate them.</p> <p>By installing a reverse osmosis system, impurities can be filtered from mains water before it enters the boilers, thereby maintaining optimum efficiency in the steam production process. The water that contains the impurities can then be saved for dust suppression on the roads and for processing gold-bearing quartz in the Battery House. Before the reverse osmosis system was installed, this water was wasted because it could not be recycled without further treatment, and this was beyond Sovereign Hill's means.</p>

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Prepared and released by Sovereign Hill Marketing

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