

# Media Release

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## INNOVATION NEEDS MORE SUPPORT: UDIA

Innovative and sustainable initiatives such as water and energy saving technologies need to be supported more vigorously by government and the broader public according to the Urban Development Institute of Australia (UDIA WA).

“Many companies and organisations developing innovative technologies are stymied by overregulation and a lack of support by government regulators,” UDIA WA CEO Allison Hailes said.

“Take for example the recent announcement that the Water Corporation has finally achieved approval for their groundwater recharge scheme,” Ms Hailes said.

“It is fantastic news however that approval has been received over a year later than anticipated and this sets back the plans to double the size of the project,” Ms Hailes said.

“Western Australia is so far behind many other states and indeed countries around the world when it comes to these types of initiatives,” Ms Hailes said. “It’s not rocket science and it shouldn’t be so difficult to get these schemes approved.”

“Surely we can learn from others experience and support the implementation of new technologies in Western Australia in a more streamlined and timely way,” Ms Hailes said.

“Government at all levels also needs to look at how new technologies, such as distributed electricity and water networks, can help home owners save money and take the pressure off of our major utility providers,” Ms Hailes said.

“The use of distributed energy networks, where power is generated through sustainable sources such as solar or wind and then saved in a community battery facility or individual home battery storage unit is slowly rolling out here in WA but they should be much more established,” Ms Hailes said.

“Imagine the pressure taken off the state government budget if people no longer relied on the main electricity grid system,” Ms Hailes said.

“Again and again there are road blocks and added costs to advancing these technologies that mean it takes far longer than necessary, or we don’t see them come to fruition at all” Ms Hailes said.

“The latest move to increase standards around local battery storage by Standards Australia seems like madness. Their release of the draft *Electrical installations—Safety of battery systems for use with power conversion equipment* is another example of over-regulation,” Ms Hailes said.

“The draft standards are seeking to impose rules that will require certain batteries such as lithium-ion that store energy from solar panels, to be housed in concrete bunkers at least

one metre from a home,” Ms Hailes said. “This will only work to make this type of technology more expensive and less appealing to consumers. With residential lots becoming smaller many homeowners simply won’t have the space to include a battery in a bunker”.

“UDIA is strongly advocating for the encouragement of innovative technologies and a move away from over regulation of this sector,” Ms Hailes said.

**Ends**