

# Process water pressures

By Jodi Elston

THIRSTY resource projects across WA are threatening to drain the state's precious drinking water supply unless other sources are found.

In Perth, the Kwinana Industrial Precinct is charged with using more than 32 gigalitres of water each year, about 4.5 gigalitres of which is drinking water.

According to Water Resources Minister John Kobelke this consumption figure is likely to more than double to 69.9GL by 2021.

But Mr Kobelke estimated the pressure on Perth's drinking supply would increase only marginally to 5.4GL in the same period.

It followed the release of the Minister's water management blue print that predicted business would start to fully utilise

water recycling and reclamation projects.

The report recommended industries reassess the quality of water it needed and increase internal recovery and recycling to reduce overall demand.

Meanwhile in the booming Pilbara, the Water Corporation is working to identify and develop the area's next major water source.

Fast-paced industrial expansion up and down the coast and the associated population increase has forced local water authorities to consider other options.

It may even consider increasing production capacity at its \$28-million desalination plant on the Burrup Peninsula.

However, Water Corporation spokesman Ashley Vincent was confident it would be prepared 'well-

ahead of when it is actually required'.

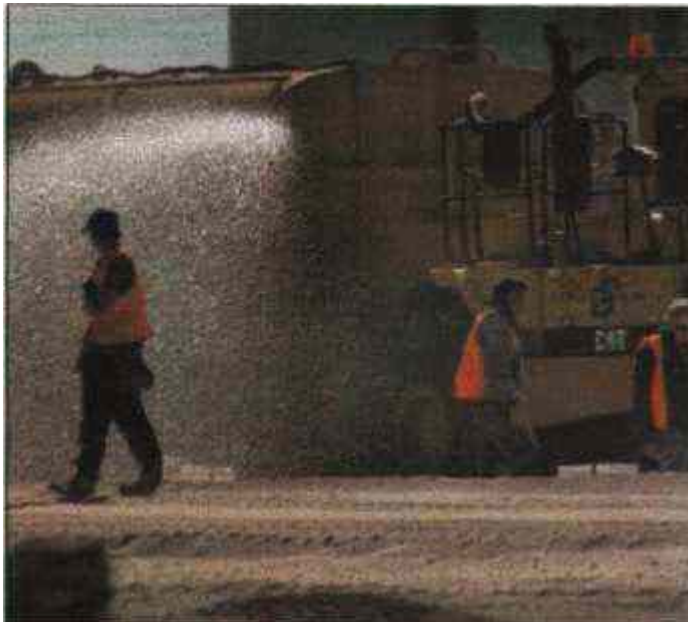
"The Water Corporation is currently reviewing a range of water source possibilities for the West Pilbara Water Supply Scheme," he said.

"The Corporation's objective is to identify and prepare to develop the source well ahead of time.

"This approach ensures we are well prepared for continuing growth in demand in Karratha and Dampier."

A Rio Tinto Iron Ore spokesman said it was also helping reduce pressure on freshwater sources.

Between 2004 and 2006, Pilbara Iron reduced its water consumption by 10 per cent on each tonne of iron ore railed to its port facilities.



The Water Corporation is searching for alternative water sources in a bid to keep up with industry and population growth.