

Sierraron[®] helps ensure a clean and safe run off

Heyne's Wholesale Nursery, Burton South Australia

A recycling project using water from neighbouring wetlands is helping Heyne's Wholesale Nursery produce high quality stock, economically, and with minimal impact on the environment.

Garry Heyne remembers how the project began. "Back in 1995 we began working with Salisbury Council to feed winter stormwater from the Kaurna Park Wetlands into the nursery. It was the first commercial use of water from the vast wetlands."

The water is stored in a subterranean aquifer and is retrieved on demand via a bore. It is then pumped into the nursery where it is filtered, disinfected and stored in three 160,000 litre tanks. Sixty-seven percent Sulphuric acid is injected into the water, changing the pH to approx 6.5. This assists the plant growth and stops calcium from building up and blocking the drippers. Garry continues, "Once the water is used in the nursery it then runs back into a wetland. It therefore needs to be clean and free from any toxic residue, meaning we have to be very careful with the treatments we use on site."

Sierraron ensures a 'weed-free' nursery

Garry Heyne uses Scotts Sierraron for weed control on the growing beds. Because it is environmentally safe with no run off or leaching it ensures the cleanliness of the water that flows back into the wetlands. It is also classified as non-hazardous removing the need for suits, masks or gloves when applying. Because it continues working for up to six months, one application provides weed control for the entire growing season.

"Thanks to Sierraron, we now have a weed-free nursery," says Garry. "This has many benefits, but in relation to the water recycling program it means we've eliminated the weeds where insects breed in the off season. We therefore don't have to use as many insecticides in the nursery, which further improves the cleanliness of the run off water."



Ducks and other wildlife live happily in the wetlands area around Heyne's Wholesale Nursery

Good for the nursery, great for the wildlife

"I know that the water running back into the wetlands from the Nursery is as clean, if not cleaner, than the water coming in because we have frogs and yabbies living happily in our nursery drains. Also if you visit the areas in the wetlands where we deposit our run off you'll find ducks and other wildlife. This shows how safe and effective our system is.

The recycling program has virtually eliminated the need for mains water, which is saving the business around \$80, 000 a year.

"Our location and situation here is unique because of the adjacent wetlands. However on my recent trip to the National Nurseryman's Conference at Fremantle, I was amazed at the amount of water recycling technology and assistance that is now available. Nursery and Garden Industry Association (NGISA) development officers are available in every state, as are Scotts representatives. The technology and treatment products are readily available for us all to improve our irrigation techniques now and into the future."



Growing success