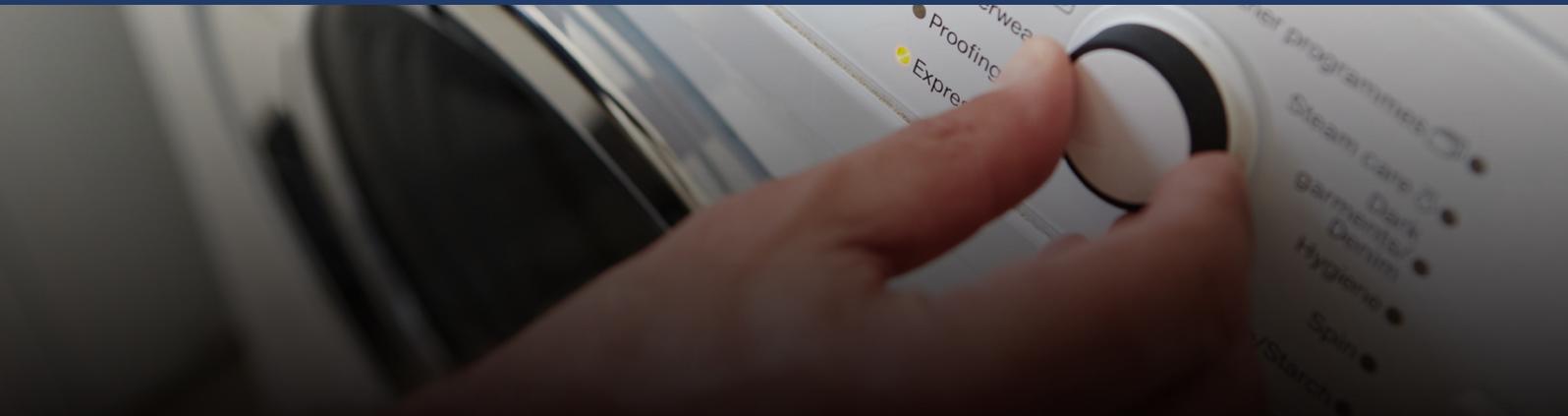


# Water hardness and its impact on the performance of your washing machine and dishwasher



## What is water hardness?

Hardness is a measure of the amount of dissolved minerals in the water. Water that has high mineral content is referred to as hard water. Hard water is formed when water permeates through ground that contains calcium and magnesium.

The majority of towns in the Northern Territory source water from ground water through bores and most of these towns have hard water due to high concentrations of calcium and magnesium in the ground.

In Darwin, water is predominantly drawn from Darwin River Dam, which is a surface water source. This water does not contain high mineral content and is referred to as soft water.

Katherine water is predominantly river water blended with some ground water and is neither hard nor soft water.

There are no health issues associated with hard water, however it can cause problems through scale build up on taps, in showers and in kettles, as well as larger appliances such as washing machines and dishwashers.

When setting up many new washing machines and dishwashers, the 'water hardness' value is required. There are a number of different hardness units of measure used by different manufacturers.

This table contains the commonly used hardness measure units for the major centres across the Northern Territory.

	Darwin	Katherine*	Tennant Creek	Alice Springs
German Degrees (°D)	2.13	5.90	10.7	11.7
French Degrees (°F)	3.80	10.5	19.0	20.9
English Degrees (°E)	2.66	7.34	13.3	14.6
milli-equivalent/l - millival	0.76	2.10	3.80	4.18
ppm CaCO <sub>3</sub>	38.0	105	190	209
mmol/l CaCO <sub>3</sub>	0.38	1.05	1.90	2.09

\*The hardness of the water in Katherine may vary depending on the ratio of river water to bore water being supplied. The values shown are the average.

## More information

Further information about water quality in the Northern Territory can be found in the Power and Water Annual Drinking Water Quality Report published on the Power and Water website:

[http://www.powerwater.com.au/news\\_and\\_publications/reports/water\\_quality\\_reports](http://www.powerwater.com.au/news_and_publications/reports/water_quality_reports)

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