

Recycled water

Policy, procedure, protocol	Policy
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Related documents	Water Strategic Business Plan Water Efficiency Strategy 2008 Sewerage Strategic Business Plan Integrated Water Cycle Management Plan
Author	Manager
Section / Department	Water Cycle
Linkage to Our Community Plan	2 Infrastructure
Objective	2.1 We will have communities that are well serviced with appropriate infrastructure
Strategy	2.1.1 Maintain and renew water and sewer networks

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1. Purpose

To provide an organisation commitment to the safe and sustainable management of recycled water. The policy provides a basis for the development and operation of recycled water management schemes involving Clarence Valley Council's wastewater treatment facilities.

2. Definitions

recycled water – Water generated from sewage and treated to a standard that is appropriate for its intended use.

risk management – The systematic evaluation of the recycled water supply system, the identification of hazards and hazardous events, the assessments of risks [likelihood and consequence of a hazard causing harm], and the development and implementation of preventative strategies to manage the risks.

3. Statement

Recycled water is increasingly recognised as a valuable resource in the urban water cycle management. There are two distinct applications for the beneficial use of recycled water. The first is providing an additional (or alternative) supply of high quality water in uses where drinking (potable) water is not required such as for road construction, toilet flushing and watering of gardens. The use of recycled water in these applications can directly reduce demand on natural water supplies.

The second type of application is minimising the release of recycled water to the environment including the ocean, groundwater and rivers by applying it to land via irrigation of agriculture, playing fields and other open spaces. Land application schemes have been in place for many years in Australia including locally at the Yamba, Iluka, Maclean and Coutts Crossing Golf Clubs and . Both public health and environmental risks need to be considered in the design and operation of these schemes. Schemes such as dual pipelines for new sub-divisions are increasingly being considered however; often require increased treatment and disinfection of recycled water to protect public health.

A range of State and Federal Government guidelines have been developed to assist water authorities in the development and management of recycled water schemes. More recent guidelines (EPHC, 2008) place increased emphasis on health risk management similar to the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (20011). The 2008 recycled water guidelines encourage water authorities to develop a robust management framework including clear statement of goals/values, scheme development processes and having appropriate operating and management practices in place. A well defined policy, development and management framework will be essential in gaining NSW Government and community approval/support for new schemes.

4. Recycled Water Management Policy

Clarence Valley Council will responsibly manage recycled water by:

- Ensuring that protection of public health, environment and water resources are of prime importance;
- Working with our employees, the Clarence Valley community, regulators and other stakeholders to ensure recycled water schemes are planned, constructed and operated consistently with industry best practices.

- Adopting a risk management approach to ensure that potential risks are made explicit, are understood, managed and accepted by customers and other stakeholders.
- Regularly monitoring and reporting of control measures and recycled water quality to promote confidence in recycled water supply and its management.
- Maintaining and enforcing Council's trade waste policy to protect the quality of recycled water produced.
- Ensuring that Council staff and agents are appropriately trained, and recipients of recycled water are educated, in the safe and efficient operation of recycled water schemes.
- Ensuring that recipients of recycled water are trained and/or educated in the safe efficient use of the water.
- Promoting community participation in decision-making processes and the ensuring that community expectations are considered.
- Promoting the use of recycled water within Clarence Valley Council and the types of recycled water activities that can be safely and appropriately undertaken.
- Clarence Valley Council will sustainably manage recycled water by:
- Ensuring schemes proposed are consistent with Clarence Valley Water's long-term strategic plans including the IWCM Strategy.
- Giving due consideration to all relevant Clarence Valley Council policies throughout the life cycle of a recycled water scheme.
- Assessing all proposed schemes and initiatives consistent with Council's sustainability framework.
- Reporting regularly to stakeholders on the activities of our recycled water business.
- Aiming to recognise and capture the economic value of recycled water over the long term by applying appropriate cost recovery principles in line with Government policies. This will include recognition that some recycled water users have undertaken substantial capital investment to use recycled water compared with other sources.
- Agreeing to the level of service to be provided with users of a recycled water scheme as part of the process of formulating agreements with end-users of recycled water.
- Promoting the efficient use of recycled water products including restricting non-essential demand during periods of drought or restriction of supply if required.
- Continuing to substitute recycled water supplies for potable water where appropriate.

5. Implementation

Clarence Valley Council will support this Policy by:

- Maintaining robust guidelines for assessing and developing new recycled water schemes.
- Implementing appropriate operations and management procedures for all recycled water schemes.
- Reporting on outcomes of its recycled water management schemes.

6. Related documentation

This is a policy document only and is supported by the following guidelines that pertain to the design and management of recycled water schemes:

- Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managing Health & Environmental Risk (EPHC, 2008)
- Guidelines for Sewerage Systems: Recycled Water (NHMRC, 2000)
- Environmental Guidelines: Use of Effluent by Irrigation (NSW DEC, 2004)

7. Access and consumption

There is a Recycled Water Irrigation fee listed in Council's fees and charges.

8. Review

The Recycled Water Policy and associated development guidelines will be reviewed on a periodic basis and particularly where new guidelines and/or management information dictates.

9. Application of sustainability principles

The policy will permit the conservation of the Valley's water resource allowing more water to remain in the environment