

Recycled Water Policy



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Responsible Manager	Manager Civil & Water Operations
Other key internal stakeholders	Director Assets & Environment Water Resources Specialist
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PURPOSE

Water security is one of the most pervasive challenges globally due to the changes in our climate. Water demand and water availability have been seen to increase in response to the changing climate. In recent times, South Australia has experienced low rainfall, longer periods between rainfall and warmer climate resulting in an increase in water demand and less than average inflows into the drinking water catchment. The City of Tea Tree Gully plays an important role by adopting environmentally sustainable practices that not only benefit the local community but the state of South Australia.

The City of Tea Tree Gully implemented a recycled water scheme that improves the City's resilience to climate change and also ensures that sporting fields, parks, gardens and reserves are functional and aesthetically pleasing to our community, while minimising impacts on the natural environment.

Recycled water is used for the following activities:

- Irrigation of sporting fields, reserves parks and gardens
- Dust suppression
- Street sweeping
- Street tree watering
- Hydro-jet operations
- Preparation of chemicals
- Service centre vehicle wash bay

The implementation of recycled water schemes are important for the following reasons, which align with Council Strategic Plan:

- Reducing the pressure on climate dependent water resources.
- Reducing the adverse impact of climate change by reducing the creating more comfortable temperature in and around irrigated reserves, creeks and wetlands.
- Promotes environmental sustainability by:
 1. Retaining water in the City enhancing biodiversity in wetlands, creeks and waterways;
 2. Reducing reliance on mains water and the River Murray; and
 3. Increasing the available water required for environmental flows, improve riparian health and reduce the risk of erosion and sediment transport.
- Reducing mains water demand and associated cost savings.
- Recharging underground aquifers with treated water providing environmental benefit.
- Flood mitigation and improvement in water quality with pre-treatment that takes place in wetlands.
- Protection of the environment through the reduction of effluent discharge into Gulf St Vincent.

The purpose of this policy is to establish a framework for the development of recycled water strategic plans, operation and maintenance of Council's recycled water collection and distribution system. The existence of this policy will assist in ensuring the provision of a sustainable recycled water network throughout the City that meets the current and future needs of the community while complying with relevant legislation and standards.

POLICY

Council acknowledges that water is a climate sensitive valuable resource that should not be wasted. Council promotes and supports the safe and responsible use of recycled water to reduce the pressures on limited drinking water resources for the purpose of maintaining public amenity and making the City a vibrant and liveable place for its community. Council's recycled water will be used for irrigation of Council's assets, supply to external users (subject to available supply), stand pipe supply for alternative use by water cartage, in accordance with all relevant legislative obligations. Council is committed to provide a healthy, safe and reliable recycled water supply.

Council will achieve this by committing to the following principles:

- Apply a risk based management approach that is consistent with the Australian Guidelines of Water Recycling (AGWR);
- Apply best practice in asset management, operation, maintenance, design and planning of recycled water infrastructure;
- Ensure that protection of public health and the environment is recognised as being of paramount importance;
- Applying the principles of ESCOSA in the management of the recycled water scheme;
- Applying the principles of the Office of Technical Regulator in the operation, maintenance and planning of the recycle water scheme
- Application of 'Catchment to Tap' management philosophy to manage water quality throughout the water cycle;
- Ensure that there is efficient use of recycled water;
- Ensure that the recycled water scheme will be able to meet current and future demands through effective stakeholder consultation;
- Where feasible, continue to expand the recycled water network to reduce reliance on mains water;
- To apply an integrated water management approach that considers economic, environmental, social and wellbeing benefits that meet the current and future needs of the community;
- To promote stakeholder confidence in Council's recycled water scheme through the safe, reliable and well maintained systems; and
- Implementation of a sound business continuity plan to minimise the risk of disruption to services.

Future Recycled Water Connections

A large proportion of Council's recycled water is supplied to Council owned facilities, which include sporting fields and major reserves (such as the Civic Park and Golden Fields reserve). A small proportion of recycled water is supplied to private customers for irrigation, which include schools.

In regard to the management of current and future recycled water connections:

- Council will cease to offer new connections to any other entity until such time Council is able to provide recycled water services that is price competitive with SA Water mains water pricing.
- Council will continue to supply recycled water to current customers connected to Council's recycled water scheme.
- Council will consider connecting new customers to the scheme with the following considerations:
 - a. Adequacy of recycled water supply to meet Council's water demand;
 - b. New connections shall provide a significant improvement in community benefit;
 - c. New customers should cover the cost of new connections. However, Council will take into consideration the value of the community benefit and provide financial assistance that will be negotiated between the Council and new customers; and
 - d. Feasibility of connecting the new customer to the recycled water scheme.

Continual Improvement

Council will:

- Participate in and support appropriate research and development activities to ensure continuous improvement and continued understanding of recycled water issues and performance;
- Contribute to the development of industry regulations and guidelines, and other standards relevant to public health and the water cycle;
- Continually improve Council practices by assessing performance against corporate commitments and stakeholder expectations;
- Ensure that employees are provided with adequate training opportunities and adequately trained to operate and manage the recycle water scheme; and
- Engage appropriate scientific expertise in developing recycled water schemes.

Communication

Council will:

- Maintain communication and partnerships with all relevant agencies involved in management of water resources;
- Recognise the importance of community participation in decision making processes and the need to ensure that community expectations are met; and
- Integrate the needs and expectations of recycled water, stakeholders into planning processes.

Employees

All managers and employees involved in the supply of recycled water are responsible for understanding, implementing, maintaining and continuously improving the recycled water management system.

Council encourages membership and participation in professional associations dealing with the management and use of recycled water.

LEGISLATIVE FRAMEWORK

It is a legislative requirement for Council to have a Recycled Water Policy to show Council's commitment to responsible use and management of recycled water quality.

The following legislation applies to this policy:

[Environment Protection Act 1993](#)

The Environment Protection Act 1993 provides for the protection of the environment.

[South Australian Public Health \(Wastewater\) Regulations 2013](#)

The Regulations provide for the management and operation of waste control systems.

Council will also implement this policy in accordance with the following:

- National Water Quality Management Strategy, Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risks 2008
- Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003
- Safety, Reliability, Maintenance, Technical Management Plan (SRMTMP)

[Water Industry Act 2012](#)

An Act to facilitate planning in connection with water demand and supply; to regulate the water industry, including by providing for the establishment of a licensing regime and providing for the regulation of prices, customer service standards, technical standards for water and sewerage infrastructure and installations and plumbing, and by providing performance monitoring of the water industry; to provide for other measures relevant to the use and management of water.

[Water Industry Regulations 2012](#)

This regulation supports the Water Industry Act 2012

[Essential Services Commission Act 2002](#)

This Act establishes the Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA)

Other references

Council's documents including:

- Council's Fees and Charges Register
- [Community Wastewater Management System and Recycled Water Customer Service Charter - Final Approved by ESCOSA May 2015](#)
- [Recycled Water Risk Management Plan](#)

External Documents Including:

- Compliance Systems and Reporting: Water Industry Guideline No.1 (WG1/2) July 2013 (available from: <http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au/water-overview/codes-guidelines/water-guidelines.aspx>)
- National Water Quality Management Strategy: Australian and New Zealand Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality, Oct 2000
- National Water Quality Management Strategy: Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risk (Phase1) 2006
- National Water Quality Management Strategy: Australian Guidelines for Water Quality Monitoring and Reporting, Oct 2000
- [National Water Quality Management Strategy: Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risks \(Phase 2\) Augmentation of Drinking Water Supplies 2008](#) – Under this strategy it is recommended as best practice to have a recycled water policy.
- Water retail code – minor and intermediate retailers WRC-MIR/01 July 2013 (available from: <http://www.escosa.sa.gov.au/water-overview/codes-guidelines/water-codes.aspx>)
- Non-drinking water guidelines – Guidelines for non-drinking water in South Australia designed for the plumbing, water industries, water industry entities and property owners with a non-drinking water supply.

STRATEGIC PLAN/POLICY

Strategic Plan

Theme	Objective	Comments
HEALTHY AND SAFE	<i>A community where people have easy access to places, spaces and services that support good health.</i>	Our community is healthy and safe
VIBRANT AND LIVEABLE	<i>A sustainable city that has a healthy natural environment and is resilient to climate change. A place that expresses a unique character and identity, an area that inspires pride in its residents and one that people enjoy visiting.</i>	Our city is a desirable and sustainable place to live

Organisation Plan

Our Strategic Plan is supported by an Organisation Plan which focuses on five key themes of organisational excellence. The themes most relevant to this report are: People and Leadership; Customers and community relations; Governance; Finance and systems, Continuous improvement

DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this policy the following definition applies:

Mains water

Water that is sourced from SA Water's drinking water supply.

Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR)

Intentional recharge of treated water for subsequent use or environmental benefit.

Recycled water

Non-potable water generated from stormwater harvesting or from sewage, treated to a standard that is appropriate for its intended use.

POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

This Policy will be implemented by the Chief Executive Officer or relevant portfolio director and managed in accordance with Council's scheme of delegations.

ACCESSIBILITY

This Policy and Council's Fees and Charges Register are available to be downloaded free of charge from Council's website: www.cttg.sa.gov.au

Hard copies, for a fee, can be provided in accordance with Council's Fees and Charges Register at Council's Civic Centre at 571 Montague Road, Modbury SA 5092.