



GENERAL INFORMATION FOR RECYCLED WATER USERS



RECYCLED WATER HAS MANY BENEFITS HOWEVER CERTAIN PRECAUTIONS SHOULD BE TAKEN TO PROTECT ENVIRONMENTAL AND HUMAN HEALTH.

EVERY LITRE OF RECYCLED WATER USED IS A LITRE OF DRINKING WATER SAVED

WHAT IS RECYCLED WATER?

Recycled water is wastewater that has been treated such that it is suitable for specific agricultural, industrial or residential applications.

HOW CAN RECYCLED WATER BE USED?

Depending on the level of treatment the uses of recycled water are almost limitless. Across Australia recycled water is used in a large number of applications, including:

- Industrial process water;

- Conserving drinking water supplies
- Irrigation of playing fields and golf courses;
- Agricultural irrigation including pastures and crop growth;
- Dust suppression;
- Fire control systems;
- Residential and commercial property use (i.e. toilet flushing, garden watering and car washing etc.); and
- Environmental flows

WHY USE RECYCLED WATER?

The use of recycled water has a number of benefits including:

- Conserving drinking water supplies
- Easing stress on natural water bodies usually used for extracting irrigation water.
- Recycled Water contains valuable nutrients reducing fertiliser requirements.
- Reduces discharge to the environment

IS RECYCLED WATER SAFE TO USE?

Yes, as long as it is used as intended it is safe for a wide range of applications. Recycled water is subject to an array of quality testing to ensure that it is fit for use.

HOW COMMON IS RECYCLED WATER USE?

Recycled Water is widely used across Australia as well as on an international level. Approximately 425GL (1GL = 1,000,000,000L) of recycled water is used across Australia. This quantity is also increasing with a number of recycled water schemes planned for the future.



WHAT PRECAUTIONS SHOULD I TAKE WHEN USING RECYCLED WATER?

Depending on the level of treatment that recycled water receives and the intended uses, onsite requirements may vary from site to site.

Hunter Water will advise you of any specific requirements that may be necessary. However some general precautions that will greatly reduce the risk to public health and the environment are listed below:

- Site visitors should be made aware of recycled water use and any precautions they should take
- Staff should be well informed on how to work with and around recycled water.
- Recycled water storages should be marked and protected to discourage unauthorised access
- Irrigation should match plant requirements to prevent overuse
- When irrigating, pooling and runoff should not occur
- Recycled water contains valuable nutrients, this should be taken into account before fertilising;
- Public access should be restricted to sites while they are being irrigated;
- Buffer zones should be in place to public access points and spray drift should be minimised;
- While working with or around recycled water it is recommended that gloves be worn, cuts and abrasions should be covered and hands should be washed before eating, drinking or smoking;

- It is important that any advice from Hunter Water regarding recycled water use is adhered to prevent any unnecessary risk to public health or the environment.
- No Recycled water produced by Hunter Water is **suitable for human consumption**

IS RECYCLED WATER PLUMBING SUBJECT TO SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS?

All recycled water plumbing and fixtures should comply with AS/NZS3500.1 plumbing and drainage – water services. In summary this standard requires that:

- A backflow prevention device be fitted at the drinking water meter
- There should be NO cross-connection between drinking and recycled water services
- All recycled water piping should be coloured purple or have appropriate and durable purple sleeving, netting or spirally wrapped tape for clear identification
- All buried pipes should be marked with longitudinal running marking tape clearly displaying: RECYCLED OR RECLAIMED-WATER-DO NOT DRINK.
- All external taps should be clearly marked with a warning sign, be fitted with a removal handle and be coloured purple.
- Hunter Water should be notified of any planned changes or modifications to existing recycled water infrastructure.

HOW CAN I PROTECT STORAGE FACILITIES?

Recycled water storage facilities are important to ensure availability of recycled water; however they can present a number of hazards. It is important to ensure storage facilities are well marked and where feasible fenced, to discourage patrons from swimming in or drinking from them.

Algal growth on ponds is a natural process; however it can be accelerated by the nutrients within recycled water. It is recommended that filters/screens are in place to prevent clogging in irrigation systems and that water use be ceased if excessive algal growth occurs.

WHERE CAN I GET MORE INFO ON RECYCLED WATER?

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO CONTACT HUNTER WATER DIRECTLY THROUGH VIA ITS CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE ON 1300 657 657 OR BY EMAIL AT ENQUIRIES@HUNTERWATER.COM.AU.

THE AUSTRALIAN GUIDELINES FOR WATER RECYCLING CAN BE VIEWED AT THE NATIONAL WATER QUALITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY WEBSITE.

FOR GENERAL INFORMATION ON RECYCLED WATER AND ITS USE PLEASE REFER TO:

WWW.RECYCLEDWATER.COM.AU

NSW DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE AND WATER