

# Drinking Water Quality Policy

## Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to provide Greater Western Water Corporation (GWW) staff and contractors with an approach and commitment of GWW to deliver safe, reliable and aesthetically acceptable drinking water to its customers.

## Objectives

In meeting our objectives to provide trusted water services for our communities and future generations. GWW will supply its customers with drinking water that satisfies the requirements of the *Safe Drinking Water Act (2003)* and *Safe Drinking Water Regulations (2015)* to achieve our objectives and customer commitments for drinking water quality as part of our Customer Charter. This policy applies to all GWW activities and applies to all employees (including Executive Team members) and all 'in house' contractors and consultants working for GWW, including those engaged through an employment agency responsible for the planning, project delivery, management, treatment, operations, maintenance and monitoring of our drinking water treatment and supply network from catchment to tap

## Commitment

To achieve our strategic objectives we are committed to: provide safe (biologically, chemically, radiologically and physically) reliable and aesthetically acceptable drinking water that is intended for immediate human consumption or purposes connected with human consumption without further treatment, by:

- Managing the GWW owned and/or managed reservoirs, water catchments and treatment facilities;
- Managing the distribution water supply network from bulk water supply points through to our storage tanks and customer points of supply to meet standards for water quality and environmental protection;
- Managing and monitor water quality objectives as required by the *Safe Drinking Water Act (2003)* and *Safe Drinking Water Regulations (2015)*;
- Managing water quality as per the Statement of Obligations under the *Water Industry Act (1994)*;
- Meeting our obligations with Melbourne Water as agreed in the Bulk Water Supply Agreement and Bulk entitlements with Southern Rural Water, and holding them to account for the quality of water they supply; and
- Utilising customer insights relating to water quality to continuously improve service delivery to customers.

## Implementation

To implement this Policy, GWW will, in partnership with stakeholders and relevant agencies:

- Adopt and meet the requirements of Victoria's *Safe Drinking Water Act (2003)* and subsequent regulations and implement a management system that is based on the 12 elements and principles outlined in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011), all of these define processes for managing and providing safe drinking water;
- Support State Government policy regarding the addition of fluoride to all water supplies (fluoridation of water will be maintained to all areas supplied from the Melbourne Water entitlement and intermittent fluoridated areas of supply will be appropriately managed);
- Purchase bulk water from reliable supplier(s), sustainably harvesting storage and distribution, put systems in place that monitor the quality of this supply and use accredited laboratories to monitor drinking water quality;
- Implement and maintain a certified quality assurance system to manage the quality of water delivered to customers to provide a catchment to tap multi barrier approach, to effectively manage risks to drinking water quality and in line with international best practice;
- Maintain drinking water quality expertise and capabilities and ensure all staff understand their role in applying the 12 elements of the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- Establish routine water quality monitoring programs, publish the results from this monitoring program and respond to customer enquiries on drinking water quality in a timely manner;
- Maintain an incident response and emergency management system to respond to water quality incidents;
- Where properties are in a dual water supply area, and are supplied with drinking water and recycled water (noting that recycled water is not provided for nor intended for human consumption),
  - Maintain Class A water (recycled water) as microbiologically safe to minimise any public health risk from accidental human consumption, via inappropriate use by the householder or accidental internal cross connection;
  - Continue to maintain accessible information for customers on how to check for cross connections at their dual supply properties;
- Participate in industry meetings dealing with drinking water quality to update current knowledge with developments in drinking water quality research and management; and
- Continually improve our water quality management practices by assessing performance against corporate commitments, implementing endorsed and approved management frameworks and stakeholder expectations.

## Roles and responsibilities

The Board is responsible for overseeing implementation of this Policy and appropriate governance and oversight of drinking water management is applied across the organisation.

The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) is responsible for incorporating GWW's drinking water quality responsibilities into business planning and operational activities.

The General Manager of Operations and Delivery Solutions is accountable to ensure the robust and risk based management of drinking water resources, operations, treatment and distribution to customers and responsible for directing, reviewing, and reporting upon the implementation of the Drinking Water Quality Policy at GWW.

Senior Leadership Team and Team Leaders are responsible for and involved in the planning, project delivery, treatment, backflow prevention, asset maintenance, supply and monitoring of drinking water are responsible for understanding, implementing, maintaining, and continuously improving the performance drinking water quality management system of drinking water quality.

The Drinking Water Quality Executive Committee is responsible for the monitoring of the effectiveness of the drinking water quality management system and this policy to manage current, future and emerging risks to drinking water quality.

As part of the quality assurance system the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) team, made up of GWW staff with core skills and expertise in drinking water management and implementation of HACCP principles, is responsible for maintaining knowledge and technical competence, conducting reviews of drinking water quality hazards analysis, maintaining an internal and external audit program and implementation of the HACCP Plan.

All employees are responsible for complying with relevant GWW policies, guidelines and processes related to this policy in a manner that safeguards drinking water.

## References and related documents

Greater Western Water Risk Management policy  
Greater Western Water Health, Safety, Environment and Quality policy  
Greater Western Water Backflow prevention and containment policy  
Greater Western Water Alternative Water Policy  
Statement of Obligations  
Bulk Water Supply Agreement  
Greater Western Water Customer Charter  
Greater Western Water Drinking Water Risk Management Plan  
Melbourne Metropolitan Water Industry Response  
*Safe Drinking Water Act 2003 (Vic)*

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Document Owner position title: Head of Water Supply and Operations

Endorser position title: General Manager, Operations and Delivery Solutions

Classification: INTERNAL USE (This document is uncontrolled when printed or saved locally)

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*Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2015*

Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011) version 3.8, updated September 2022, or the most recent version electronically published, referred to as Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011)

*Environmental Protection Act 2017*

*Health (Fluoridation) Act 1973*

Code of Practice for Fluoridation of Drinking Water Supplies

*Food Act 1984*

*Essential Services Commission Act 2001*

*Competition and Consumer Act 2010*

Dangerous Goods (Storage and Handling) Regulations 2022

Blue Green Algae Circular

Environmental Management System - ISO 14001

Quality Management System – ISO 9001

Occupational Health & Safety Management System - AS 45001

Drinking Water Quality Management System

HACCP Principles & Systems Procedures

**Review process**

The policy will be reviewed annually or more frequently as required

**Approved by the Board 25 June 2024**

**Next due for review by the Board in June 2025**

**Version Control Table**

| Version Number | Document Owner's Position Title        | Purpose/Change   | Date            |
|----------------|--|--|-----------------|
| 4              | Head of Water Supply and Operations    | Updated to new template<br>Updated the roles and responsibilities to reflect the outcomes of the Drinking water benchmarking actions. Minor edits.   | 1 February 2024 |
| 3              | Manager of Water Supply and Operations | Addition of 'chemically' to definition of safe drinking water and addition of references to understanding our roles and applying the 12 elements of the ADWG in the Implementation section. Updated document references and Policy review dates. | 27 June 2023    |