

Plumbing Regulation News Updates are issued as and when necessary, to keep the Tasmanian Plumbing Industry informed of developments occurring in the industry, Tasmanian Plumbing Code and its referenced documents and legislation.

DRAFT NATIONAL GUIDELINES FOR WATER RECYCLING

Purpose

The purpose of this news update is to inform industry stakeholders that Draft National Water Recycling Guidelines - Managing Health and Environmental Risks have been released for public consultation.

Background

Given the ongoing pressure to increase water recycling to cope with droughts and increasing demand for water, water-recycling programs are being developed by all jurisdictions throughout Australia. Recycling, for the most part substitution for non-drinking water uses of drinking water, is seen as crucial to successfully managing demand and deferring expensive new infrastructure.

As a result of these demands, the Environment Protection and Heritage Council and the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council initiated the development of national guidelines for water recycling.

Draft guidelines

The draft guidelines comprise a risk management framework and specific guidance on managing the health risks and the environmental risks associated with the use of recycled water.

The guidelines initially focus on:

- large-scale treated sewage and grey-water to be used for:
 - residential garden watering, car washing, toilet flushing and clothes washing;
 - irrigation for urban recreational and open space, and agriculture and horticulture;
 - fire protection and fire fighting systems;
 - industrial uses, including cooling water; and
- grey-water treated on-site (including in high rise apartments and office blocks) for use for garden watering, car washing, toilet flushing and clothes washing.

The release of a draft set of guidelines by the Environment Protection and Heritage Council and the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council gives organisations and individuals the opportunity to be informed about the guideline development process and to provide comment that can be taken into account prior to their finalisation. The purpose of the document is to provide guidelines for assessing risk (rather than to provide a 'how to' manual for water recycling), and a particular focus will be placed on obtaining feedback from the public consultation process as to the utility of the guidelines for different types of users.

The *National Guidelines for Water Recycling – Managing Health and Environmental Risks* and a report *National Guidelines for Water Recycling – Managing Health and Environmental Risks – Impact Assessment*, which assesses the likely impacts of a move to a national risk management framework, can be downloaded from http://www.ephc.gov.au/ephc/water_recycling.html .

Submissions

Submissions may be lodged electronically or in hardcopy. All submissions will be public documents unless clearly marked 'confidential' and may be made available to other interested parties. The release of the guidelines does not signify government endorsement of every aspect of the document other than as a suitable basis for wider consultation with the community.

The closing date for submissions is Friday 13 January 2006.

Written submissions on the draft guidelines should be sent to:

Mr Haemish Middleton
Project Officer
NEPC Service Corporation
Level 5, 81 Flinders Street
ADELAIDE SA 5000
Email: hmiddleton@ephc.gov.au

Further development of the guidelines

Phase two of guideline development, is anticipated to commence in 2006, will focus on stormwater reuse, aquifer storage and recovery as a method of recycling reclaimed water and potable use of recycled water.

For your diary

The Environment Protection and Heritage Council and the Natural Resource Management Ministerial Council are proposing to conduct stakeholder consultation in Hobart between 12:00pm and 3:00pm on the 6th December 2005 so pencil this into your diary. Exact times and location will be announced as soon as they have been finalised.

Further information

Information on the guideline development and consultation processes or how to make a submission can be obtained from the NEPC Service Corporation on (08) 8419 1200 or by emailing exec@ephc.gov.au .

The information in this News Update has been sourced from EPHC website.

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