**Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*)** ***e-*flash**

**Information for Water Industry Managers and Practitioners in the Queensland Water Industry**

**(Issue #390– 10 May 2019)**

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**1.  Register Now for the Reef Councils Wastewater Stewardship Strategic Assessment (WWSSA) Project**

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[Registrations](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/reef-councils-mip/event-info-site/ExtraContent/ContentPage?page=1) are now open for the [Reef Councils Wastewater Stewardship Strategic Assessment (WWSSA) Project](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/reef-councils-mip/event-info-site/ExtraContent/ContentPage?page=1) being held on 4 June 2019, from 9:30 am to 3:30 pm at the Crosby Park Events Centre, Brothers Rugby Club, 103 Crosby Road, Albion. The workshop is open to representatives from Reef Councils and any other local governments interested in knowing more about the work.

**About the WWSSA Project**

The Stage 1. Strategic Assessment (WWSSA) component of *Initiative 1. Wastewater Stewardship* in the Reef Councils MIP proposal was developed by councils in the Reef catchments. Reef Councils are investing in continuous improvement in local assets and activities to reduce total discharges to the Reef, improve water quality and respond to increasing community expectations and regulations. However, investment in high-tech sewage treatment plants (STPs) is expensive with diminishing returns.

The project will work with interested Reef Councils and key stakeholders to identify priority STPs, short-list suitable alternative options and determine low risk sites to trial their effectiveness in a range of catchment environments and climatic regions. Stage 2 (currently unfunded) will undertake the innovation trials in selected locations.

**Workshop Objectives:** The aims of the first workshop are to:

* brief elected members and council officers on the activities and outcomes of the WWSSA project;
* scope further participation in the initiative by interested councils; and
* develop a methodology to identify priority STPs and potential sites for trials.

Future meetings including a second workshop will identify options for improved stewardship, negotiate potential trial sites and develop a strategy to attract investment for conducting the trials.

This project is a joint initiative of the Office of the Great Barrier Reef (OGBR), the LGAQ and ***qldwater*** under the Reef Councils Major Integrated Projects (MIP) proposal.

For further information contact ***qldwater*** on 3632 6850 or email [Diana Kislitsyna](mailto:dkislitsyna@qldwater.com.au) or [Rob Fearon](mailto:rfearon@qldwater.com.au).

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**2.   PFAS National Environmental Management Plan Update**

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**PFAS National Environmental Management Plan Update**

Service providers are invited to provide feedback on the **PFAS National Environmental Management Plan VERSION 2.0 CONSULTATION DRAFT** by the end of May.The first PFAS National Environmental Management Plan (NEMP) was developed and released in January 2018 by the National Chemicals Working Group (NCWG) of The Heads of EPAS Australia And New Zealand (HEPA). The aim was to provide a risk-based framework for the environmental regulation of PFAS-contaminated materials and sites.

The current NEMP (Version 1) reflects the public feedback from the first consultation draft and the current state of knowledge and is now being updated. The significant updatesin PFAS NEMP V2.0 Consultation Draft include:

* **S10 On-site storage, stockpiles and containment** has been expanded with more guidelines on design and containment facilities;
* **S12 Reuse of PFAS-contaminated materials** now includes a decision tree for re-use of PFAS-contaminated soils (this does not over-ride other applicable regulations and existing approved PFAS management plans may still take precedence); and
* **S15 Wastewater Treatment (significant change as this was previously a short section on trade waste discharge)** has been expanded to be a guidance and proposed framework (with an example) for providers of sewerage networks and onsite management and treatment of wastewater and trade waste. This is intended to help utilities demonstrate compliance to regulators, stakeholders and the broader community and may impact regulator licence conditions.

Further information is available in a fact sheet prepared for ***qldwater*** members available [here](https://qldwaterau.worldsecuresystems.com/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=249468&Preview=True).

We are seeking input **by COB 24th May 2019** so we can provide a collated submission on behalf of members on the practical and financial implications for Water Service Providers. Please send any comments to Rob Fearon ( [rfearon@qldwater.com.au](mailto:rfearon@qldwater.com.au)) or to Moira Zeilinga ([moira@clearidea.com.au](mailto:moira@clearidea.com.au) or mobile 0409 892 896) who has been engaged to collate the feedback and develop the response. Alternatively, we encourage service providers to send submissions directly to the developers by 31st May 2019 using the links provided at <https://www.epa.vic.gov.au/your-environment/land-and-groundwater/pfas-in-victoria/pfas-nemp-2-0>.

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**3.   Proposed Reef Regulations**

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The Innovation, Tourism Development and Environment Committee’s inquiry into the Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019 has tabled *Report No. 16, 56th Parliament - Environmental Protection (Great Barrier Reef Protection Measures) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2019*.  The report can be found [here](https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/Documents/TableOffice/TabledPapers/2019/5619T573.pdf) and documents relating to the committee’s inquiry, including transcripts and submissions can be viewed on the inquiry page of the [committee’s website](https://www.parliament.qld.gov.au/work-of-committees/committees/ITDEC/inquiries/current-inquiries/16EnvProGBRPM).

The report focuses on the agriculture sector and makes scant mention of the impacts on sewerage service providers. The sector-wide concern was acknowledged: “*new or expanded STPs will need to be designed to operate within current limits or seek water quality offsets. Any population growth in towns and cities in GBR catchments will thus incur additional expense*” (see p. 39 of the Report). However, the response was that “*this standard can be met either through the design and operation of the activity or through an offset. The department further noted that the requirement will be applied to new developments or major amendments only. It will not be applied retrospectively to existing operators*.”

Offsets are discussed at length. It is acknowledged that they will be very important for STPs because “*the new standards are going to no net decline. Therefore, it is a much more significant standard for them to meet*” (p. 39).

Unfortunately we are still waiting on the new Point Source Offset’s Policy to be released by the Department. The latest update is that the Policy is being modified to reflect the additional impact of the new reef legislation but is not significantly changed from the last version the sector provided comments on (in late 2018). We will provide further information on the progress of the Point Source Policy and the proposed reef Regulations when it comes to hand.

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**4.   The alum (WTP residuals) end of waste code**

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[The alum (WTP residuals) end of waste code](https://environment.des.qld.gov.au/waste/pdf/wr-eowc-draft-water-treatment-residuals.pdf) has been posted for comment. Submissions due by 31 May.

This End of Waste (EOW) code for water treatment residuals has been issued by the Queensland Government in accordance with section 159 of the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011 (WRR Act). This EOW code states when the water treatment residual waste becomes a resource and any relevant requirements and/or conditions for its use. If the resource is not being used in accordance with the relevant requirements and/or conditions of this EOW code, or another type of permit that allows for its use, it is considered a waste and must be disposed of appropriately at a facility that is lawfully able to receive the waste.

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**5.   Upcoming *qldwater* events**

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**4 June** Reef Councils Wastewater Stewardship Strategic Assessment (WWSSA) Project– [Registrations are now open!](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/reef-councils-mip/event-info-site/ExtraContent/ContentPage?page=1)

**13 June** ***qldwater*** Asset Management Workshop – [Registrations are now open!](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/qwd-trg-asset-management-workshop---breaking-through-the-barriers/event-info-site/ExtraContent/ContentPage?page=1)

**5 July** Townsville City Council Regional Mini-Conference – Call for Papers. If you are interested in presenting, please contact Dave Cameron ([dcameron@qldwater.com.au](mailto:dcameron@qldwater.com.au); 0407 761 991)

**26 July** Hervey Bay Regional Mini-Conference – Call for Papers. If you are interested in presenting, please contact Dave Cameron ([dcameron@qldwater.com.au](mailto:dcameron@qldwater.com.au); 0407 761 991)

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**6.   QUICK LINKS – ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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**WIOA Queensland Operations Conference and Exhibition**

Registrations are open to attend the **WIOA Queensland Operations Conference and Exhibition** to be held in Bundaberg from 5-6 June, 2019. A program and registration form is available on the [WIOA website](https://wioaconferences.org.au/qld-2019/qld-delegates/).

The conference includes technical presentations from a variety of organisations and a trade exhibition with more than 80 exhibitors showcasing the very latest products and technologies available. The multiple social events offer fantastic opportunities for networking with other water industry personnel from across Queensland.

The Queensland Mains Tapping Competition is always a highlight of the event and a number of Queensland teams have already nominated to participate. If you have a team of two to compete against teams from the Gold Coast, Bundaberg, Fraser Coast, Cairns and QUU, please contact Craig Mathison on 0457 846 008 or [craig@wioa.org.au](mailto:craig@wioa.org.au).

***qldwater*** will be there supporting Mackay Regional Council and its winning water in the battle for the Ixom Water of Origin Taste Test and will be looking forward to the announcement of winners of the ***qldwater*** awards for Young Operator and Operator of the Year (Civil/All-Rounder), and AWA’s Operator of the Year award.  We also look forward to meeting some new trainees from councils in the region – we have been able to support registrations for four new assistant operators through the Water Skills Partnership with WIOA’s help.

We will have a booth and hope to chat to as many people as we can as we undertake some research around operator workforce planning.

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**This message may be passed on to interested individuals and organisations.**

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