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

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

**(Issue #335– 12 October 2017)**

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**1.   Regulation of Sewage Pump Stations**

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For several years, the sector has been working with the Department of Environment and Heritage protection on developing a Code of Practice for sewage pumping stations and networks and removing the standard conditions required under ERA 63 (see <http://www.qldwater.com.au/sewage-pumping-stations>). After a long period of deliberation, the Environment Minister determined earlier this year that removal of the standard conditions is no longer possible but recognised that they could benefit from review. The Minister also encouraged the industry to continue development of the Code of Practice so that pump stations could then be managed under both a Code and the Standard Conditions.

In response, the SWEAP group has provided advice that removal of regulation in favour of an industry Code of Practice would have provided the best mechanism for environmental protection because it would address the entire collection network and promote flexibility for innovation to avoid negative environmental impacts.

In this light, further development of the Code of Practice has ceased but the SWEAP group welcome the opportunity to work further with the Department on revising the standard conditions. The years of negotiation on the Code of Practice and standard conditions between the sector and the Department mean that the issues are well understood by all parties. It is hoped that existing conditions can be modified to increase flexibility for innovation in the management of networks and pumping stations to mitigate environmental risks in the most effective and efficient manner.

It is unlikely that any changes will be made leading into the wet season, **so this is a timely reminder to all service providers that pump stations with a capacity greater than 40 kL/hr must be registered under an approval**. If approval conditions are being negotiated then the [standard conditions](https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/assets/documents/regulation/pr-es-pump-stations.pdf) provide a basis that can be modified through approved variations. Modifications ought to be requested as the standard conditions can be overly onerous in many cases (particularly  Condition 10 which requires no release to land or waters, an impossibility for most networks in Queensland conditions). For further information please contact Rob Fearon.

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**2.   Draft Point Source Water Quality Offsets Policy - *qldwater* Collated Response**

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***qldwater*** collated information and input from across the urban water and sewerage sector in response to the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection’s [request for submissions](https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/water/monitoring/point-source-water-quality-offsets/) on the [Draft Point Source Water Quality Offsets Policy](https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/water/monitoring/documents/draft-point-source-water-quality-offsets-policy.pdf).

The sector has indicated that this this policy is important to the future environmental sustainability of Queensland communities and flexible options are urgently needed to improve environmental protection with more efficient use of limited public funding. The offsets policy could provide an essential foundation for such options if it can be amended to better meet its stated aim of flexibility.

The collated response is now available on the [***qldwater*** website](http://www.qldwater.com.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=234017).

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**3. Draft *qldwater* Response to Productivity Commission Report on Water Reform**

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The ***qldwater*** [draft response to the Productivity Commission](http://www.qldwater.com.au/_literature_234066/Draft_qldwater_Response_to_Productivity_Commission_Report)’s request for feedback on the  [Draft Report on National Water Reform](http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/water-reform/draft) is now available on our website.

In general the Draft Report is quite responsive to the input provided by the urban water sector in the past including previous formal submissions by [qldwater](http://www.qldwater.com.au/ReviewDocuments) and [LGAQ](http://www.pc.gov.au/inquiries/current/water-reform/submissions#initial).  However, the draft recommendations raise a number of issues for the Queensland urban water sector and those that are of greatest concern are discussed in the ***qldwater*** draft response.

If you have additional issues to raise or would like to comment on our submission, there is still time to make changes. However, consultation closes on the 19th October so all comments must be received by [rfearon@qldwater.com.au](mailto:rfearon@qldwater.com.au) by Tuesday 17th.

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**4.   NHMRC ADWG – New Fact Sheet on Lanthanum**

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The National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) maintain the *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 2011* (ADWG) through a rolling review process to ensure they provide an evidence-based framework for the management of drinking water supplies. The ADWG contains a fact sheet and health based guideline value (HBGV) for a number of chemicals that might be present in drinking water.

The draft fact sheet on lanthanum has been developed by the NHMRC and the National Industrial Chemical Notification Scheme, to provide guidance on lanthanum in drinking water. Lanthanum (marketed as Phoslock) may be applied to bodies of water to reduce algal blooms.

On 9 October 2017, NHMRC published a new chemical fact sheet and HBGV on lanthanum for inclusion in the ADWG. The administrative report on the review process of the chemical fact sheet and the summary report on the public consultation process is available on the ADWG website: <https://www.nhmrc.gov.au/guidelines-publications/eh52>.

Please contact [water@nhmrc.gov.au](mailto:water@nhmrc.gov.au) if you have any questions.

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