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

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

**(Issue #348 – 13 April 2018)**

**1.   More resources to support management of telecommunications infrastructure**

**2.   WQ Queensland Conference & Taste Test, Cloncurry 18 May – register now!**

**3.   DES Water Quality Offsets Policy – last chance to comment**

**4.   Seqwater bulk water price investigation 2018-21: Final report published**

**5.   Havelock North drinking water contamination**

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**1.   More resources to support management of telecommunications infrastructure**

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Eflash #346 included a reference to a meeting held among a number of SEQ water service providers to share information on opportunities to better manage commercial arrangements with telecommunications providers.

This resulted in a number of documents which are now available to ***qldwater*** members by navigating to <http://www.qldwater.com.au/Planning_Source_Water_Network> on our site and clicking on the “SEQ Telco” tab.

These include a [summary report from the meeting](http://www.qldwater.com.au/_literature_239764/SEQ_Telco_Summary_Report_March_2018), a conditions of approval template to undertake works on site, some email templates for responses to telcos, sample access permit agreements, a checklist for designers and a range of other fact sheets.

These documents have been provided for the benefit of all Queensland water service providers as an acknowledgement of the importance of an industry-wide approach to look at what can be done to improve telco engagement within the existing regulatory framework, while prosecuting improvements to that framework through the efforts of WSAA and others.  We extend our thanks to ***qldwater*** SEQ members, and Seqwater for their willingness to continue to engage in this process.  For further information, contact Dave Cameron [dcameron@qldwater.com.au](mailto:dcameron@qldwater.com.au).

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**2.   WQ Queensland Conference & Taste Test, Cloncurry 18 May – register now!**

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Register now for the ***qldwater*** Western Queensland Regional Water Conference to be held in Cloncurry on 18 May.

A regional Ixom Best of the Best Water Taste Test is also being held at the conference.  Don’t forget to bring along 2 litres of tap water to enter into the competition.  This should be from the scheme which the service providers consider to be their best tasting water. Each sample must be submitted in a container which clearly identifies the name of the water provider and the system/scheme it represents. Water samples will be judged by conference attendees, with the samples being judged remaining anonymous.  Further information including entry form and rules of the taste test competition are [available here](http://www.qldwater.com.au/Water_Taste_Test).

The conference is being hosted by Cloncurry Shire Council and is kindly sponsored by Gold Sponsors Royce Water Technologies, Aquatec Maxcon and Silver Sponsors Aqseptence Group. Again in 2017, Dial Before You Dig are sponsoring our Water Connections Tour which includes regional events and Water Connections Week and IXOM are sponsoring the Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test which includes support for all regional events. We would like to thank all our sponsors for helping make this event possible.

The event will be a great opportunity to network with your peers in the region and hear some excellent technical presentations.

Please visit our [event website](https://ipweaq.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/qldwater-wq-conference-cloncurry-18-may-2018/wq-conference) for further information including draft program and registration.

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**3.   DES Water Quality Offsets Policy – last chance to comment**

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The Department of Environment and Science (DES) is seeking to finalise the new [Water Quality Offset’s Policy](http://www.qldwater.com.au/ReviewDocuments) (see Background below).  ***qldwater*** has compiled a joint response from the urban water and sewerage sector based on comments provided at three sessions convened to collect industry feedback (see eFlash #346) and comments received from members since then. The [response (available in the members-only area](http://www.qldwater.com.au/ReviewDocuments)) is available for comment (by email to [rfearon@qldwater.com.au](mailto:rfearon@qldwater.com.au)) until the end of April.

In short, the sector is disappointed that its previous key recommendations could not be met, particularly that:

1. further collaborative development of the Policy is not possible.
2. the Guideline being developed has a narrow scope when it should set a broad context for possible offsets, and
3. there is no support for critical joint development of further case studies of innovative approaches (e.g. downstream offsets or offsets between catchments).

**Background:** In 2017 the Environment Department sought to upgrade the existing ‘[Voluntary market-based mechanism for nutrient management](https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/water/monitoring/documents/market-based-nutrient-managment-pilot.pdf)’ and released 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). Following engagement with the urban water sector the Department called for a [request for submissions](https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/water/monitoring/point-source-water-quality-offsets/) and ***qldwater*** provided a [collated industry response](http://www.qldwater.com.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=234017&A=SearchResult&SearchID=126724303&ObjectID=234017&ObjectType=6) in September 2017. In March 2018, an updated draft Policy was released with further engagement sessions for the urban water industry. At this time it was also announced that a Guideline was being developed independently to support the Policy.

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**4.   Seqwater bulk water price investigation 2018-21: Final report published**

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The Queensland Competition Authority has completed its investigation into bulk water prices for south east Queensland for 2018-21.

While the State Government continues to determine bulk water prices, since 2015 it has asked the QCA to recommend prices for the coming three-year period. The QCA completed its first full review of Seqwater’s bulk water prices in 2015 and recommended prices for 1 July 2015 to 30 June 2018. In that instance, the Government set prices for that three-year period which were consistent with the QCA’s recommendations.

This final report has been prepared ahead of the 1 July 2018 to 30 June 2021 period and has been submitted to the Government and published on the QCA website. The Government will decide bulk water prices after considering the QCA’s final recommendations.

The final report was provided to the Queensland Government on 28 March 2018 and is now available on the [Seqwater website](http://www.qca.org.au/water/urban-bulk-water/seq-bulk-water/in-progress/seqwater-bulk-water-prices-2018-21).

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**5­.   Havelock north drinking water contamination**

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In August 2016, an outbreak of gastroenteritis caused an estimated 5,500 of the town’s 14,000 residents to have become ill with 45 subsequently hospitalised.  It is possible that the outbreak contributed to three deaths, and an unknown number of residents continue to suffer health complications. [eFlash #342](http://www.qldwater.com.au/e-flashes-2018) provided more details of the investigation with the [Stage 2 report](https://www.dia.govt.nz/diawebsite.nsf/Files/Report-Havelock-North-Water-Inquiry-Stage-2/$file/Report-Havelock-North-Water-Inquiry-Stage-2.pdf) released in December.

Water New Zealand have recently released a video of a very informative presentation provided at a Napier seminar discussing what happened, what caused the outbreak, and assessing the conduct of those responsible for providing safe drinking water to Havelock North. The video is available here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=AF5-IMyN8UM>

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