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

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

**(Issue #309 –  22 February 2017)**

**1.   SWQ Conference, Dalby 1 March – Earlybird rate extended until tomorrow**

**2.   Release of Queensland’s Urban Potable Water and Sewerage Benchmarking Report – 2015/16**

**3.   Automated Metering/ Digital Utilities Workshop and EOI for Leakage Workshop in May**

**4.   DEHP's voluntary market-based mechanism for nutrient management policy**

**5.   *qldwater* NRL Tipping Competition**

**6.   Smart Water Advice Seeking Support**

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**1.   SWQ Conference, Dalby 1 March – Earlybird Rate extended until tomorrow**

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The Earlybird Rate for the ***qldwater*** South West Queensland conference has been extended to COB tomorrow 23 February. The conference is being held at the Dalby Leagues Club in Dalby on  Wednesday 1 March in conjunction with the IPWEAQ SWQ Branch Conference being held on 2-3 March.

The conference presentations in the morning will be followed by a great technical tour hosted by Western Downs Regional Council to the Dalby Truckwash Wastewater Treatment Plant at the Dalby Saleyards.   Register now to secure the Earlybird rate! Registrations must close on Monday 27 February.

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**2.   Release of Queensland’s Urban Potable Water and Sewerage Benchmarking Report – 2015/16**

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Queensland’s sixth water and sewerage benchmarking report has been completed using 2015/16 data and is available from the ***qldwater*** website – <http://www.qldwater.com.au/reporting>

The report provides data from 71 Service Providers across the State.

Benchmarking of Queensland’s water and sewerage data is important for the Queensland urban water industry as it allows competition by comparison and helps provide transparency for our communities.

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**3.   Automated Metering/ Digital Utilities Workshop and EOI for Leakage Workshop in May**

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We received very positive feedback from the workshop held on 16 February.  Thanks again to the excellent speakers and discussion leaders from Unitywater, Cairns Regional Council, Townsville City Council, Queensland Urban Utilities, Mackay Regional Council and City of Gold Coast.  There was significant diversity in the cases presented and interesting analyses of the business drivers for digital utility solutions.  21 ***qldwater*** members were represented, with some latecomers having to be turned away due to the room capacity of 80.  Presentations will be made available to participants in the members-only section of our web site soon, and our report capturing the cases, business drivers, risks and benefits will be available in the next few weeks.

Our Technical Reference Group met on the following day to respond to some of the future needs identified during the workshop.  These includes an improved understanding of communications issues (i.e. where various telcos and technologies are heading) and a desire to better be able to value “intangibles” when developing a business case.  Based on technology alone, most cases demonstrated only marginal benefit.  However the presentations reflected that the knowledge gained to support planning decisions from well-analysed data, and the potential for building a better customer relationship through these solutions, were clear benefits that were difficult to measure.

At this stage we plan on including a session devoted to these topics (and customer engagement more broadly) at our Innovation Forum on 6/7 September.

The success of the workshop has prompted TRG to request another on a topic of common interest.  The intent is to hold the workshop prior to the next TRG meeting and we are seeking to determine whether there is enough support to warrant hiring a venue.  The costs are likely to be the same, approximately $100 per person to cover venue and catering.

**Topic:  System leakage solutions**

**Date: 25 May, approximately 10am to 3pm**

**Format:  Up to 6 utility presentations on historical and current approaches to non-revenue water management, incorporating DMAs, other technologies used and possible future approaches.** We are yet to commence the invitation process and may be able to attract some other speakers.

If you are interested, please respond to hgold@qldwater.com.au by 6 March with:

* Number of people likely to attend
* Contact information so that we can send a short survey around prior to the event to target the program to your needs as far as possible.

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**4.   DEHP's voluntary market-based mechanism for nutrient management policy**

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The Department of Environment and Heritage Protection is seeking feedback to inform the review of its policy concerning flexible options for managing point source water emissions. Local governments and operators of environmentally relevant activities, such as sewage treatment plants, are invited to provide comments to the department on the policy, including opportunities and barriers to implementation. To access a copy of the policy, please visit <https://www.ehp.qld.gov.au/water/monitoring/voluntary-nutrient-management.html>

Feedback on the existing policy is sought by Friday 10th March 2017. The revised draft policy will be released for public consultation in May, followed by a finalised document in mid-2017.

To submit your feedback, please email the department at evinfo@ehp.qld.gov.au*.*

***qldwater*** will also be collating an industry response on this Policy change in consultation with our ERA 63 Expert Panel. If you would like to have input or contribute to the joint feedback, please contact Rob Fearon (rfearon@qldwater.com.au) with your input by 7 March.

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**5.   *qldwater* NRL Tipping Competition**

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The ***qldwater*** NRL tipping competition is open again to employees of ***qldwater*** members. Joining is free, simply go to <http://www.footytips.com.au/comps/qldwater>, then:

1.      click on the green join button,

2.      login or create an account if you don’t have one already,

3.      choose completion “**QWD NRL Tipping”** competition with password “**qldwater**”

4.      Enter your preferences and start tipping.

The rules of our competition are available on the site. In brief:

        Not tipping in any round will give you the away teams (but with a maximum).

        Each tipper can choose 5 joker rounds (which double your score for that week).

        There is no point bonus for tipping all teams correctly but the bottle of wine prize remains.

        Prize for leader half way through season – State of Origin Jersey of your preferred shade (of maroon).

Other rules:

        Only employees of ***qldwater*** members of can tip and win prizes.

        Prize for season winner - weekend holiday voucher for two.

        Prize for correctly tipping 8 games in any single round - bottle of wine.

If more than one person tips all 8 games in any round, a draw will determine the winner of the bottle of wine.

Good luck and happy tipping.

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**6.   Smart Water Advice Seeking Support**

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After the closure of savewater.com.au in mid-2015, and in response to water industry demand, Smart Approved WaterMark has set up Smart Water Advice.

Smart Water Advice is a water efficiency resource consisting of online water saving information for the home, garden and business sectors, educational interactive resources, a video library, posters and factsheets.  All materials are regionalised and branded for its members.

The program launched in Victoria in mid December 2016, with the support of every water utility and the state government.  You can view the resource here: [www.SmartWaterMark.org/Victoria](http://www.smartwatermark.org/Victoria).  It also has the support of 28 councils in NSW - members of Centroc, Lower Macquarie Water Utilities Alliance and Namoi Water Alliance.

Membership fees for Smart Water Advice in Queensland are based on the number of connections.  $2500 per annum for less than 50,000 connections; $5000 per annum for between 50,000 and 100,000; and $7500 per annum for over 100,000 connections.  The program pricing has been designed so that small councils and utilities can collaborate to gain access to a resource at very low cost.  If groups of councils gather together the costs can be even lower.

If you are interested in learning more about the program please complete the [Expression of Interest for Smart Water Advice Form](http://www.qldwater.com.au/_literature_225531/Smart_Water_Advice_Expressions_of_Interest_Form) and return it to Chris Philpot, CEO, Smart Approved WaterMark, alternatively email Chris at chris.philpot@smartwatermark.info to discover more about the resource.

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

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