

# » recycled water facts

## for owners, plumbers and builders



**Factsheet No.2**  
August 2017  
[ballinawater.com.au](http://ballinawater.com.au)

**This factsheet explains the responsibilities of home owners, plumbers, builders and Ballina Shire Council to ensure we all get the most out of recycled water.**

### » Recycled water customers are responsible for:

- Ensuring recycled water is used only for suitable purposes.
- Advising anyone entering their property that recycled water is on site and of its correct uses.
- Maintenance of recycled water pipes and taps, in the home or business, up to the outlet side of the water meter.
- Ensuring all work and maintenance on the recycled water system is undertaken by a NSW licensed plumber.
- Ensuring recycled water taps are not removed or replaced with conventional taps. (This increases the potential risk for misuse of recycled water and could result in a health risk to the customer.)
- Ensuring that no cross connections are made between recycled water and drinking water systems. Cross connection means connecting drinking water pipes, taps or hoses to recycled water pipes, taps or hoses. Appropriate purple accessories including hoses and sprinklers should be used to connect to the recycled water network.
- Ensuring missing, damaged or faded recycled water warning signs are replaced. Replacement signs, taps and pipes are available from most plumbing and irrigation suppliers.
- Informing Ballina Shire Council and persons at the property if a cross connection is detected on a property.

### » Ballina Shire Council is responsible for:

- Recycled pipes from the supply system up to and including the water meter.
- Ensuring management systems are in place to maintain and repair the recycled water network.
- Providing recycled water that meets or exceeds the standards outlined in the Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling.
- Monitoring the quality of recycled water in the network, as well as that produced at the Ballina and Lennox Head Recycled Water Treatment Plants.
- Reporting to the NSW Department of Primary Industries, the supplier regulator, the results of this monitoring.
- Informing and educating customers about the uses and benefits of recycled water.
- Independently auditing all dual reticulated properties as required by the NSW Department of Primary Industries. All outlets for drinking and recycled water services are checked for cross connections during these audits.
- Responding to customers who report plumbing compliance issues by organising a Council plumber and drainage inspector to investigate the problem.

### » Getting connected

Recycled Water is supplied to new properties through a separate pipe network which is coloured purple for easy identification. Recycled water is not yet available in all areas. You will need to check with Council whether your property is within a dual reticulation area. Your builder or plumber will need to apply to Council for a water service connection, just as they do for drinking water connections. Your recycled water plumbing will then be checked by Council's Building Services Section during construction to ensure that it is properly installed.

## »» Seven steps to check for cross connections

Checking a property's recycled water supply is a simple seven step process that anyone can undertake at any time.

1. Turn off drinking water supply at the property boundary and rainwater tank pump and/or valve.
2. Turn on all internal taps. Taps should run dry.
3. Flush all toilets. Toilets should refill if connected to recycled water supply.
4. Turn on external taps. Your drinking water tap should run dry. Taps continuing to run are connected to recycled water supply and should be coloured purple and marked with appropriate signs.
5. Turn off recycled water supply and turn on drinking water supply and rainwater tank pump and/or valve. Run recycled water supply dry via external taps or toilet flushing.
6. Turn on internal appliances. Appliances that do not fill are connected to the recycled water supply. Only the washing machine and toilets should be connected to recycled water.
7. Turn on recycled water supply. Slowly turn on a tap connected to recycled water supply. It is best to use a tap that is located furthest from the meter to purge all air from the pipeline while it is being recharged.

If you encounter problems whilst undertaking the check you will need to contact a plumber or call Council on 02 6686 4444 for assistance.

## »» Recycled water plumbing

Your plumber must connect all your toilets to the recycled water supply. It will be a condition of connection that you must have at least one recycled water tap in your front or backyard. You will also need to have only one outdoor drinking water tap in either your front or backyard. If your recycled connection is locked off this means your plumber has not yet completed all the tasks required by Council. If you are about to move into your new home and your recycled water is still locked off, contact your builder or plumber.

## »» Meters

Properties supplied with recycled water will have two meters which will sit side by side and approximately 300mm apart. The recycled water meter will be purple. When planning your driveways and landscaping, you should make allowances for two meters at the front of the property.

## »» Signage

The 'Recycled Water Do Not Drink' signs on each purple tap have a limited life span due to sunlight. Once they deteriorate, it is the responsibility of the householder to replace these. New signs can be purchased from plumbing suppliers and are not expensive.

## »» Rainwater tanks

Rainwater tanks are not recommended in areas where recycled water is available. This is because recycled water is higher quality and more reliable - it's even available during drought. Where a rainwater tank is installed it must meet strict controls and it can not be topped up with recycled water nor drinking water.

## »» How do I know where council pipes are located?

Council keeps records and maps of underground infrastructure. Anyone who intends to begin digging or excavation work (even in your own backyard) should lodge a Dial before You Dig enquiry before commencing work. **For more information visit the Dial Before You Dig website at [www.1100.com.au](http://www.1100.com.au) or call 1100.**

**The information in this factsheet only applies to the Lennox Head and Ballina recycled water schemes. For information about the Alstonville and Wardell recycled water schemes please refer to Factsheet No 8.**

»» **Need more info? Visit our water website [ballinawater.com.au](http://ballinawater.com.au)  
T 02 6686 4444 E [council@ballina.nsw.gov.au](mailto:council@ballina.nsw.gov.au)**

