

Residential Pool Wastewater Disposal Policy

Water Supply (Safety & Reliability) Act 2008

1. Policy Statement

Townsville City Council (Council) aims to encourage and assist pool owners in the environmentally responsible enjoyment of a residential swimming pool. This policy provides:

- Council's written consent for the discharge to sewer of filter backwash water in certain situations (a specific written approval is not required); and
- guidance on the disposal of residential pool wastewater, including filter backwash water, overflow water and pool emptying water.

2. Principles

Through this policy, Council aims to:

- provide a written consent authorising owners/operator of residential pools to discharge filter backwash water in certain situations, so as to comply with s.193(3) of the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*;
- minimise discharges from residential swimming pools into the sewerage network immediately prior to, during and after wet weather events, as a means of reducing the risk of wet weather-related sewage overflows;
- prevent environmental harm from the release of filter backwash water from a residential pool; and,

3. Scope

This policy applies to owners, operators and designers of residential pools and all workers with responsibility for the management of pool wastewater, including Water Services, Resource Recovery, Planning & Development and Environmental Health & Regulation.

Discharges to the sewer from non-residential and/or commercial pools are not covered by this policy and must be done in accordance with a trade waste approval issued under section 180 of the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*. See Council's website for more information.

4. Responsibility

The Chief Planning and Development Officer and Director Infrastructure & Operations are responsible for providing written approval to discharge to sewer where appropriate.

Issues of non-compliance with this policy are the responsibility of the Chief Planning and Development Officer and will be dealt with under relevant laws.

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5. Definitions

Environmental Harm - as defined in the *Environment Protection Act 1994*, is any adverse effect, or potential adverse effect on an environmental value.

Filter Backwash Water - means a wastewater stream emanating from the backwashing of the pool filter of a residential pool.

Flow Restriction Device - means a device, such as a gardening hose or in-line flow control valve, that limits the amount of wastewater discharged from the residential pool into the sewerage network to a flow of 40 litres per minute or less.

Manager - an individual responsible for overseeing and coordinating specific functions, departments, teams, or projects within Townsville City Council.

Overflow Water - means excess rainwater that would overtop the sides of a residential pool to allow for maintenance or decommissioning of the pool.

Pool Maintenance Drainage Water - means wastewater from reducing the level in a Residential Pool to allow for maintenance or decommissioning of the pool.

Prescribed Water Contaminant - any of the substances listed in Schedule 10 of the *Environmental Protection Regulation 2019* which includes backwash from swimming pools (section 23).

Residential Pool - means an excavation or structure designed to be filled with water, located on land used for residential purposes, and used as a swimming pool or ornamental pond.

Sewerage Network - means Council's network of sewers, access chambers, vents, engines, pumps, structure, machinery, outfall, or other work used to receive, store, transport or treat sewerage.

Stormwater Drain - means a channel or pipe that conveys stormwater.

Wet Weather Event - means any storm or rainfall event that may have inflow impact on the sewerage network, including short duration high intensity storms; sustained rain over several days; or any rainfall involving power outages.

Workers - includes employees, contractors, volunteers and all others who perform work on behalf of Council.

6. Policy

6.1. Filter Backwash Water

Under section 193(3) of the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* it is an offence to discharge filter backwash water into the sewerage network without Council's written consent. The Council provides written consent of the discharge of residential pool filter backwash water into the sewerage network under this policy provided that the discharge does not occur immediately prior to, during, or within at least 48 hours after the end of, a wet weather event.

Filter backwash water may be lawfully discharged to the property where the pool is located, provided that the backwash water is contained on the property and does not result in environmental harm.

Filter backwash water must not be discharged to the environment outside the property boundary or into any stormwater drain. Doing so may constitute an offence under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, section 440ZG for depositing a prescribed water contaminant.

6.2. Pool Overflow Water

It is lawful for pool overflow water to be discharged to or overflow onto the property where the pool is located.

Pool overflow water must not be discharged into the sewerage network at any time.

6.3. Pool Maintenance Drainage Water

Council provides written consent of the discharge of pool maintenance drainage water into Council's sewerage network provided that:

- the water is clean;
- the chlorine concentration is below 5 mg/L;
- the discharge occurs at least 48 hours after a wet weather event; and,
- a flow restriction device is used.

Pool maintenance drainage water must not be released to the environment outside the property boundary or into any stormwater drain. Doing so may constitute an offence under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*, section 440ZG for depositing a prescribed water contaminant.

6.4. Connection To Sewer

All connections to the sewer must be in accordance with AS/NZS 3500.

Any discharge to the sewer that is not consistent with this policy must have prior written consent from Council.

7. Legal Parameters

Environmental Protection Act 1994

Environmental Protection Regulation 2019

Plumbing and Drainage Act 2018

Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2019

Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008

8. Associated Documents

Australian Standard AS/NZS 3500 (Plumbing and Drainage)