



# Residential Pool Wastewater Disposal Policy

*Water Supply (Safety & Reliability) Act 2008*

# 1. POLICY STATEMENT

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

- deemed approvals 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, overflow and pool emptying water.

## 2. PRINCIPLES

Through this policy, Townsville City Council aims to:

- Provide a deemed approval authorising owners/operators 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 wastewater from swimming pools; and
- Emphasise to pool owners/operators their obligation to comply with the Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008 which forbids the discharge of a prohibited substance (including rainwater) into the sewerage network and the Environmental Protection Act 1994 which forbids the unlawful depositing of a prescribed water contaminant (including filter backwash) into a stormwater drain.

## 3. SCOPE

This policy applies to owners, operators and designers of residential pools and all council staff with responsibility for the management of pool wastewater, including Townsville Water & Waste; Planning Services and Environmental Health & Regulatory Services.

Discharges to sewer from non-residential and/or commercial pools are not covered by this policy and must be in accordance with a trade waste approval (see Trade Waste Policy).

## 4. RESPONSIBILITY

The General Manager Community Engagement is responsible for communicating this policy to stakeholders.

The Chief Planning and Development Officer and sGeneral Manager Townsville Water & Waste 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.

## 5. DEFINITIONS

**Environmental Harm** – as defined in the *Environment Protection Act 1994*, and includes nuisance conditions such as creation of odours, and fly and mosquito breeding areas that may result from ponding of water.

**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 swimming pool into the sewerage network to a flow of 40 litres per minute or less.

**Manager** – includes persons appointed to positions including with the title, Team Manager, General Manager, Principal, Director and Chief.

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**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.

**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 Townsville City 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 s.193 (3) of the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* it is offence to discharge filter backwash water into the sewerage network without council's approval. The Council approves of the discharge of residential pool filter backwash water into the sewerage network 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.

### 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, or into a stormwater drain, provided it does not result in environmental harm.

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

### 6.3. POOL MAINTENANCE DRAINAGE WATER

The Council approves of the discharge of pool maintenance drainage water into council's sewerage network provided that:

- The water is clean;
- 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, unless chlorine levels have been reduced to below 0.1 mg/L and the discharge does not cause environmental harm.

### 6.4. CONNECTION TO SEWER

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

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

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## 7. LEGAL PARAMETERS

*Water Supply (Safety & Reliability) Act 2008*

*Environmental Protection Act 1994*

*Plumbing and Drainage Regulation 2019*

## 8. ASSOCIATED DOCUMENTS

Townsville City Council Trade Waste Policy

Australian Standard AS/NZS 3500 (Plumbing and Drainage)

## 9. DOCUMENT HISTORY

Date	Version	Amendment	Reviewer	Approved

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