

Public Health Policy

Purpose

To manage Melbourne Water's contribution to the protection of public health and to promote and facilitate a sustainable water future.

Scope

The Public Health Policy applies Melbourne Water's Strategic Framework sustainability principles to its public health responsibilities.

Definitions

Public Health – freedom from illness and discomfort so that human activities can be enjoyed.

Risk considerations

Public health is a business focus area for Melbourne Water. Not managing public health risks will result in the community suffering ill health and discomfort. Most risk is managed through regulatory requirements but risk can occur due to public health issues that have not yet been regulated. Melbourne Water will consider both when determining the best way to apply its resources.

Background

This Public Health Policy supports Melbourne Water's Strategic Framework. The Framework formalises Melbourne Water's commitment to sustainability and links our programs to relevant government policy platforms such as *Melbourne 2030*.

Community and external stakeholder consultation

Melbourne Water has consulted with retail water companies and other stakeholders, including the Department of Human Services in determining its public health objectives that form the basis of this Policy.

Policy statement/Procedure

The following goals from the Strategic Framework will be used to direct activity:

- Provide high quality and reliable drinking water
- Understand, manage and meet or exceed customer expectations
- Protect Melbourne's existing water resources through sustainable catchment management practices
- Respond to climate change through mitigation and adaptation measures
- Secure water supplies for current and future generations by developing new, alternate and diverse water resources
- Supply fit-for-purpose and reliable recycled water
- Manage flood risk

- Improve the health and amenity of waterways and marine environments
- Deliver safe sewage transfer, treatment and disposal
- Work collaboratively with stakeholders and strengthen relationships
- Maintain sound governance
- Provide a safe, healthy and enjoyable working environment

Strategies, performance measures and key performance indicators are detailed in Melbourne Water's three-year *Corporate Plan*, reviewed on an annual basis. The *Water Plan* summarises outcomes and actions Melbourne Water will deliver over the pricing period. Current public health actions and outcomes include the following:

Public health actions and outcomes	Target date
Provide a cost effective, reliable supply of safe, high quality drinking water that consistently meets the <i>Safe Drinking Water Act 2003</i> and regulations and the <i>Health (Fluoridation) Act 1973</i> .	Continual
Transfer and treat sewage, and ensure appropriate disposal, recycling or beneficial use of water and biosolids in a way that safeguards the health of the community.	Continual
Minimise the impacts of stormwater and other discharges on receiving waters and thereby contribute to safe recreational opportunities for the community.	Continual
Maintain and implement an independently certified drinking water quality management system incorporating Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point and ISO9001.	Continual
Comply with Bulk Water Supply Agreements water quality requirements and Water Plan outcomes.	Continual
Adopt a multi-barrier approach to drinking water safety that includes: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • restricting human access to the water supply system including protected catchments, reservoirs and other assets • detention in large storages • closed distribution system • undertaking studies to identify the need for sustainable improvements to barriers and risk management • utilising planning instruments (eg planning overlays) • engaging with stakeholders and the community to ensure that barrier protection is not compromised through catchment deterioration • appropriate treatment, monitoring and verification. 	Continual

Maintain and implement an independently certified quality management system incorporating Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point, ISO9001 and ISO22000 for other supplied water including recycled water	Continual
Manage public health issues other than those related to supplied water (drinking, recycled etc) through a management system independently certified to ISO 14001.	Continual
<p>Improve performance and optimise public health outcomes by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • remaining abreast of relevant international trends in public health policy, epidemiology studies, treatment technology and system management and operation • undertaking research on the relationship between water quality and public health. • active involvement in the development of National and International guidelines for water management. • monitoring of key KPIs by Melbourne Water's Board 	Continual
<p>Providing safe and efficient stormwater and waterway services including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working with local government and the development industry to implement best practice stormwater management • investigating and managing the public health impacts of discharges to waterways • monitoring for blue-green algae in recreational water bodies. 	Continual

Performance on progress in achieving our goals, outcomes and actions is reported in Melbourne Water's Annual Report.

References/Related documents

[Strategic Framework – Working together to ensure a sustainable water future \(PDF, 840kb\)](#) 

Drinking Water Quality and Risk Management Plan

Strategic Drinking Water Quality Planning Framework

Eastern and Western Treatment Plants HACCP Plans

This policy does not prescribe specific procedures required to implement policy. These are included in management systems, procedures and other instructions.

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