

## 1. Purpose

Melbourne Water, owned by the Victorian Government, manages and protects our city's water supply catchments, treats and supplies drinking and recycled water, removes and treats most of Melbourne's sewage, and manages waterways and major drainage systems in the Port Phillip and Westernport region.

Public health is central to the implementation of Melbourne Water's Vision – Enhancing Life and Liveability. This Policy formalises Melbourne Water's commitment to public health and sets out the objectives and principles that are incorporated into our strategies and operating procedures to ensure public health continues to be protected through the provision of our core services and all business activities.

## 2. Scope

This Policy applies to all Melbourne Water activities that can impact public health.

## 3. Objectives

Melbourne Water will deliver its public health commitment through the following objectives:

Deliver safe and reliable high quality drinking water from source to customer

Provide safe and reliable sewage transfer, treatment and disposal and deliver fit-for-purpose manufactured water and products

Understand, minimise and manage the impact of flood risk

Improve the health and amenity of waterways to enhance community wellbeing

## 4. Principles

- Commitment to the General Environmental Duty described in the *Environment Protection Act* (2017).
- Demonstrate leadership for Sustainable Development Goals 6 (Clean Water and Sanitation), 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities) and 15 (Life on Land).
- Meet drinking water legislative obligations for existing and new water sources based on a multi-barrier approach and drive continuous improvement in anticipation of future legislative changes.
- Protect Melbourne's existing drinking water sources through sustainable catchment management practices and understanding the risks associated with recreational activities to ensure drinking water safety is preserved.

- Minimise the impacts of stormwater on receiving waters and thereby contribute to safe recreational opportunities for the community.
- Understand and continue to monitor existing and emerging risks to public health that may impact our ability to deliver services.
- Maintain and implement an independently certified integrated management system, based on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point and ISO 22000 (Product Quality), ISO 9001 (Quality), ISO 14001 (Environment) and ISO 45001 (Occupational Health & Safety) for applicable activities, products and services and ensure effective governance and reporting.
- Ensure biosolids and recycled water supplied to customers meet relevant state and national public health legislation and guidelines, including Environment Protection Agency Victoria biosolids and recycled water guidelines.
- Facilitate positive adaptation and mitigation to manage the public health impacts of a changing climate considering both physical and psychological wellbeing in the community.
- Improve performance and optimise public health outcomes by remaining abreast of relevant national and international trends in public health policy, treatment technology and system management and operations.
- Undertake collaborative research on the relationship between Melbourne Water's services and public health.
- Provide safe and efficient stormwater and waterways services by working with local government and the development industry to implement best practice stormwater management and minimise the risks associated with flooding.
- Ensure that our advice and products do not result in unacceptable public health outcomes in accordance with Melbourne Water's risk appetite.
- Support a safe and healthy workplace environment as a cornerstone of delivering effective public health services, recognising that employee safety and wellbeing directly impacts our ability to protect the community.
- Undertake appropriate assessments of risks, resilience, costs, and benefits to inform the design and management of our assets, and the content of our public guidance material, in order to protect public health and to responsibly enable multiple benefits to meet community expectations where:
  - benefits are considered likely to outweigh costs and appropriately apportioned, and
  - where risks can be managed in line with Melbourne Water's Risk Appetite Statement and any relevant legislative and/or regulatory obligations.

## 5. Reporting and Monitoring

The governance of this Policy is performed by the Finance, Audit and Compliance Committee and the Policy is approved by the Melbourne Water Board.

## 6. Attestation

Implementation of this Policy will be demonstrated through compliance with licence and regulatory obligations.

## 7. Accountability

Board oversight of the implementation of this Policy is by the Finance, Audit and Compliance Committee.

## 8. Review

The content of this Policy will be reviewed every three years.

## 9. Authorising Environment

The key regulatory and legislative requirements driving the need for the Policy are shown below.

Acts, Regulations and Guidance Documents
<i>Water Act (1989)</i>
<i>Safe Drinking Water Act (2003) and Safe Drinking Water Regulations (2015)</i>
<i>Environment Protection Act (2017)</i>
<i>Health (Fluoridation) Act (1973)</i>
<i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008)</i>
<i>Occupational Health and Safety Act (2004)</i>
EPA Victoria – Victorian guideline for water recycling - publication 1910 (2021)
EPA Victoria – Technical information for the Victorian guideline for water recycling - publication 1911.2 (2021)
Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2022) National Health and Medical Research Council
Australian Guidelines for Water Recycling (2006) National Water Quality Management Strategy
Department of Health and Human Services Victoria (2013) Guidelines for validating treatment processes for pathogen reduction

## 10. Definitions

Public Health is freedom from illness and discomfort so that human activities can be enjoyed. Public health includes both physical health and the wellbeing interests of the community.

## 11. Key Related Documents

Document title
Melbourne Water Global Compact Network Australia CEO Statement of Support for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (2017)
GOV POL Risk Management
Healthy Waterways Strategy (2018-28)
Drinking Water Quality Strategy (2023)
Melbourne Sewerage Strategy (2019)
Greater Melbourne Urban Water & System Strategy Water for Life (GMUWSS 2023)
GOV POL Risk Appetite Statement
GOV POL Quality
GOV POL Environmental
H&S POL Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Flood Management Strategy, Port Phillip and Westernport (2021-2031)

## 12. Document History

Date	Reviewed/ Actioned By	Version	Action
February 2025	Principal Scientist	17	Policy review interval changed from two years to three years Approved by Finance, Audit and Compliance Committee October 2024. Approved by Board February 2025
January 2024	Information Management	15, 16	System administration updates (no changes to document)
February 2023	Principal Scientist	13, 14	Approved by Customer and Service Delivery Committee February 2023. Approved by Board February 2023
October 2020	Principal Scientist	12	Approved by Customer and Service Delivery Committee August 2020. Approved by Board October 2020