



Using Class A recycled water

Class A recycled water is a safe and high quality resource that has been filtered and purified using advanced treatment technology.

It is a renewable resource that is not subject to the same water restrictions as drinking water. It is cheaper to use and is always in supply, regardless of climate or population factors.

It is strictly monitored to ensure it meets high water quality standards in accordance with guidelines set by the Department of Health (DoH) and the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

Recycled water has been used in Australia and other parts of the world for many years. Countries such as Singapore, the USA, the United Arab Emirates and Israel use recycled water as a component of their water supply systems.

In Victoria, Class A recycled water is currently available for residents in Wollert, Epping North, Craigieburn West, Cranbourne, Eynesbury, Carrum Downs and Clyde, with new systems being developed across the state.

Class A recycled water will be delivered directly to properties in some new residential developments in our region through a separate purple pipe system.

The quality of water determines the appropriate use. Recycled water use is governed by the EPA and DoH and is approved for a specific range of uses.

Based on EPA guidelines, Barwon Water has approved the following uses:

- irrigation of public open space, such as parks and sports fields
- garden watering, including vegetable gardens and turf
- washing cars, outdoor furniture and external house cleaning
- ornamental ponds and water features
- toilet flushing
- fire hydrants.



Top: Class A recycled water can be used for washing cars on grassed areas.

Using recycled water for high domestic activities such as garden watering and toilet flushing is expected to result in drinking water savings of up to 50 per cent in a typical residential development.

Each house will be supplied with two taps in the front yard – one for recycled water (purple) and one for drinking water. There will only be one purple tap in the backyard for recycled water.

Recycled water from dual pipe systems should not be used for:

- drinking
- cooking or other kitchen purposes
- bathing and showering
- filling domestic swimming pools and spas
- children's water toys.

Although EPA guidelines allow clothes washing, Barwon Water does not yet endorse this use.

Occasionally, recycled water may have slight colour variations that may stain clothes. This use may be approved when the new recycled water plant at Black Rock is fully operational and the colour of recycled water can be guaranteed.

While recycled water is a high quality resource, slight odour and minimal discolouration are possibilities from time to time. This is not an indication of poor quality.

Guidelines will be provided to residents in all developments that have access to a purple pipe system, ensuring users have the correct information about the approved uses of Class A recycled water.

If you do accidentally drink Class A recycled water, there is no need to panic. It is treated to a very high standard, which means the likelihood of falling ill is extremely low. However, should you experience any symptoms or feel unwell, you should consult your doctor.

Avoiding cross-connections

A cross-connection is when a connection occurs between the recycled water and drinking water pipelines.

All recycled water plumbing work within homes and businesses must be undertaken by licensed plumbers who are familiar with the requirements of the Victorian Plumbing Industry Commission when it comes to recycled water connections. The Plumbing Industry Commission, supported by Barwon Water, will check the plumbing at every property prior to the owner moving in, to ensure the plumbing is correct.

If you think there may be a cross-connection, there are a few simple steps you can take to check your household or business plumbing system:

1. Turn your drinking water off at the meter
2. Turn all your indoor taps on – if they don't run dry in a few minutes, there may be a cross-connection
3. Flush your toilets – if they flush and refill as normal, they are connected to the recycled water system
4. Turn your taps off, turn the drinking water meter back on, then carefully turn the taps back on to allow trapped air to escape.

You can check your outside taps using the same simple test.

Getting connected

All residents and businesses in the new developments of Armstrong Creek, Torquay North and Fyansford will be required to connect to the purple pipe system.

Every home, business and sports club in these new developments will have a dual water supply - a drinking water pipeline and a recycled water or purple pipeline.

The recycled water pipeline will have a purple meter and purple taps with appropriate signs.

Each house will be supplied with two taps in the front yard – one for recycled water (purple) and one for drinking water. There will only be one purple tap in the backyard for recycled water.

Being connected to the purple pipe system will help satisfy the Building Commission of Australia's five star energy rating for new homes, as an alternative to connecting a rainwater tank. Residents will still be able to install rainwater tanks if they wish to for supplementary watering of their gardens, however they will not be eligible for government rebates for these tanks.

Other water authorities in Victoria that have installed purple pipe systems in new developments have experienced a 100 per cent take-up rate by residents due to the benefits of recycled water, which include cheaper pricing and that it is not subject to drinking water restrictions.



Top: Purple hoses and fixtures identify recycled water in use.

For further information about the use of Class A recycled water, please contact us:

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