

Frequently Asked Questions

March 2021

Connecting to the scheme

Once the scheme is constructed, how do I connect my property?

When it is time to connect, we will work with you to ensure you have the right tools and information to connect your property to the recycled water supply.

What support will I get once I am connected?

The Environmental Protection Authority Victoria (EPA) and the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) provide guidelines on the use of recycled water that everyone must follow. When it's time to connect, we'll ensure you have all the tools and information to help you manage recycled water safely on your site prior to supplying you. These guidelines take the shape of an Environmental Improvement Plan (EIP) specific to your site.

Can visitors and the public still come to my site when I start using recycled water?

Yes, but you should inform your visitors about recycled water and ensure the 'Recycled water– Do not drink' signs are placed near outdoor recycled water taps and clearly visible near any outdoor recycled water storages. You will also need to irrigate during times that avoid contact with persons that may be using your facility (e.g. vegetable pickers).

What kind of controls do South East Water and businesses need in place to minimise risks associated with using Class A recycled water?

Since Class A recycled water is not suitable for drinking, there are a range of controls that both the EPA and DHHS require to ensure public health and the environment are not compromised.

The key environmental risk is that recycled water should not escape to any surface water (e.g. irrigation runoff must be contained on site) or groundwater systems (e.g. dams should be clay lined).

From a health perspective, when using recycled water for irrigation or industrial processes you need to ensure you comply with the National Guidelines for Water Recycling (2006).

South East Water has controls and processes in place to ensure:

- There are no cross connections between drinking water and recycled water in the distribution network.
- Plumbers can easily identify recycled water with the purple pipes and fittings above and below ground.

To ensure the health and environmental risks are kept to a minimum, South East Water will work closely with businesses to ensure they understand all these requirements. The key things you need to consider are:

- For any irrigation or plumbing works on site, use a licensed plumber or irrigation contractor who is trained to work with recycled water.
- Install or paint the appropriate taps purple and have 'Recycled Water – Do not drink' signage on site so that employees can identify those taps delivering recycled water.
- Have an EIP outlining the controls and information about managing recycled water onsite, approved prior to supply.
- Understand what to do in the event there is an incident.
- Check any storages to ensure recycled water is contained on site and dams are suitably lined (e.g. clay lined).
- Minimise exposure to the public by scheduling irrigation times either early in the morning, late afternoon or after hours.

Will access be required to any of the recycled water infrastructure located on my property?

Yes. We'll need access to recycled water infrastructure on your property (like your recycled water meter) for activities including meter reading, maintenance and servicing. Ease of access will need to be considered when determining the location of the meter and other shared infrastructure before finalising the design of the recycled water pipeline. Once recycled water is taken beyond the meter and into your property, you will be responsible for the operation and maintenance of this infrastructure.

Need to get in touch?

We're here to help. For more information, please contact either of the following:

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