

1. Purpose

Melbourne Water’s vision of Enhancing Life and Liveability is underpinned by three pillars, Healthy People, Healthy Places and Healthy Environment. Each pillar represents a commitment to public health through delivery of core services and a safe workplace and also for responding to future challenges. The provision of safe services is a cornerstone of public health protection. This Policy formalises Melbourne Water’s commitment and sets out the objectives and principles by which Melbourne Water will deliver this public health commitment.

2. Scope

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

3. Objectives

The Public Health policy objectives below are designed to maximise public health benefits to the community from Melbourne Water activities:

Deliver safe and reliable high quality drinking water

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 and Actions

- Demonstrate commitment to and application of the Environmental Duty of Care defined in the Melbourne Water Environmental Sustainability Policy
- 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 ISO9001, ISO14001, ISO45001 and ISO22000, 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 EPAV biosolids and recycled water guidelines
- Facilitate positive adaptation and mitigation to manage the public health impacts of a changing climate
- 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
- Provide a workplace that protects our employees
- 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 Customer and Service Delivery 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 Customer and Service Delivery Committee.

8. Review

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

9. Authorising Environment

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

Act, 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 (1970, 2017)</i>
<i>Health (Fluoridation) Act (1973)</i>
<i>Public Health and Wellbeing Act (2008)</i>
State Environment Protection Policy (Waters) 2018 (administered under EP Act)
EPA Victoria – Guidelines for environmental management: Use of reclaimed water (2003)
EPA Victoria – Guidelines for environmental management: Biosolids land application (2004)
Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (2011) National Health and Medical Research Council
Australian Guidelines for Recycled Water (2006) National Water Quality Management Strategy
Department of Health and Human Services Victoria (2013) Guidelines for validating treatment processes for pathogen reduction
ISO 22000:2018 - Food safety management systems - Requirements for any organisation in the food chain
Codex Alimentarius – General Principles of Food Hygiene

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 CEO Statement of Support for the UN Sustainable Development Goals (2017)
Risk Management Policy Corp Gov 002
Healthy Waterways Strategy (2018-28)
Drinking Water Quality Strategy (2023 Draft)
Melbourne Water Sewerage Strategy (2019)
Greater Melbourne Urban Water & System Strategy Water for Life (GMUWSS 2023)
Risk Appetite Statement Corp Gov 089
Gov Pol Environmental Sustainability Policy

12. Document History

Date	Reviewed/ Actioned By	Version	Action
February 2023	Principal Scientist	13	Approved by CSDC February 2023. Approved by Board February 2023
October 2020	Principal Scientist	12	Approved by CSDC August 2020. Approved by Board October 2020