# RECYCLED WATER INCIDENT REPORTING PROTOCOL

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## 1 Interpretation

Terms used in this Protocol:

Department Department of Health (Western Australia)

Recycled water Water generated from sewage (including greywater, yellow water, black water) or from industry that is treated to provide fit-for-purpose water quality for its intended beneficial use.

Recycled water scheme A recycled water project with an elaborate and systematic plan of action to identify and manage risk from wastewater collection to end use.

Events (or Notifiable events) The events listed in section 3 of this Protocol.

Guidelines [*Guidelines for the Non-potable Uses of Recycled Water in Western Australia*](https://www.health.wa.gov.au/~/media/Files/Corporate/general%20documents/water/Recycling/Guidelines%20for%20the%20Non-potable%20Uses%20of%20Recycled%20Water%20in%20WA.pdf)*.*

Hazardous event Has the same meaning as in section 5.1 and the Glossary of the Guidelines, via an incident or situation that can lead to the presence of a hazard.

Health-related water quality objectives

The microbial indicators which are to be considered, and the quality levels to be reached, as determined by the Exposure Risk Level identified for the particular end use.

Scheme Manager The Scheme Manager is the organisation which manages the recycled water scheme including its treatment train.

## 2 Scope

2.1 This protocol documents the actions to be followed when a water sample taken from a recycled water scheme indicates that recycled water does not comply with a health-related water quality objective, or when any other hazardous event occurs such that the recycled water may pose a risk to public health.

2.2 Actions covered in this protocol are in addition to routine periodic reporting as specified by the Department.

2.3 A sample that indicates that recycled water does not comply with the health-related water quality objective, or any other hazardous event that may pose a risk to public health, is deemed to be an Event. Events are categorised into two levels of severity and corresponding response action.

* Events Level 1

– major level public health impact with potential to require public notification.

* Events Level 2

– minor level public health impact requiring exception notification.

2.4 The scope of this protocol does not apply to any sewage (including recycled water) spills, as defined by the[*Wastewater Overflow Notification and Response Procedures (2021*](https://www.scgh.health.wa.gov.au/~/media/Files/HealthyWA/Original/Wastewater-Overflow-Notification-and-Response-Procedures.pdf)*).* Sewage spills should be reported to the Department in the nominated time period and by email to [ssalert@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:ssalert@health.wa.gov.au) as outlined in the *Wastewater Overflow Notification and Response Procedures*.

## 3 Events

### 3.1 Events – Level 1

* Allegation of illness from public associated with a recycled water scheme made to the Scheme Manager
* Closure of the recycled water scheme resulting in the supplying wastewater treatment plant needing to utilise an emergency and unauthorised treated wastewater disposal method
* ‘High’ Exposure Risk Level Recycled water scheme where two consecutive microbial results at regulatory sampling point(s) are above a health-based water quality objective as defined in the DoH approval
* Identified cross connection of a recycled water scheme with a drinking water supply
* Any other major hazardous event that the Scheme Manager considers could represent a public health risk

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### 3.2 Events – Level 2

* Recycled water scheme where two consecutive microbial results at regulatory sampling point(s) are above a health-based water quality objective as defined in the DoH approval (not including ‘High’ Exposure Risk Level Recycled water schemes)
* Release of wastewater into a recycled water scheme where an algal bloom exceeds the nominated alert mode level as per the *Department of Health’s Algae Response Protocol1*
* Incident with public health impact resulting in a closure of recycled water scheme with an anticipated duration of greater than 24 hours (and not resulting in the supplying wastewater treatment plant needing to utilise an emergency and unauthorised treated wastewater disposal method)

1 – Draft *Algae Response Protocol* under development.

## 4 Notification

4.1 The Scheme Manager shall notify the Department of any event described in Section *3 Events* within the times listed below.

4.2 The reporting protocol for Events - Level 1 shall be by telephone as specified by [Appendix 3 – Department Contacts](#_Appendix_3_-)*,* in accordance with [Appendix 1 - Events – Level 1 – Reporting Format](#_Schedule_1_-), within 24 hours of becoming aware of the event. Confirmation shall be by email within one working day in accordance with [Appendix 1 – Confirmation Email](#_Schedule_1_-).

* 1. The reporting protocol for Events - Level 2 shall be by email as specified by [Appendix 3 – Department Contacts](#_Schedule_3_-)*,* in a format in accordance with [Appendix 2 – Events – Level 2 – Reporting Format](#_Schedule_2_-), within one working day of the Scheme Manager becoming aware of the event.

## 5 Response by the Department

5.1 The Department shall reply to all notifications as soon as possible by telephone (Events – Level 1) and by written or electronic means (Events – Level 1 and 2).

## 6 Communications

6.1 Events - Level 1

All communication to the Department shall be to the Managing Scientist – Water Unit or, if not available, to the Emergency Duty Officer as specified by [Appendix 3 – Department Contacts](#_Schedule_3_-).

6.2 Events - Level 2

All communication to the Department shall be to the nominated email addresses as specified by [Appendix 3 – Department Contacts](#_Schedule_3_-).

## Appendix 1 - Events - Level 1 - Reporting Format

Phone Content to the Emergency Duty Officer

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Name |  |
| Recycled Water Scheme Manager |  |
| Contact Number |  |
| Reporting to: | **Managing Scientist – Water Unit** |
| Event | **Event type**  **Location**  **Time of event**  **Brief description of event** |

Phone Content to the Managing Scientist – Water Unit

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Subject | **Locality**  **Event Type** |
| Event | **Time of event**  **Brief description of event**  **Proposed Actions and Timeframe** |

Confirmation Email

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Subject | **Locality**  **Event Type**  **Event Level** |
| Event | **Copy of email**  **Copy of Incident Report**  **Relevant water quality performance data**  **Details of Event *(including cause of event, proposed duration, and any action taken to cease supply)***  **Additional background information**  **Proposed Actions and Timeframe *(including, for example,  proposed re-start procedures, flushing and how the water quality is to be validated and verified)*** |
| Email to | [wwalert@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:wwalert@health.wa.gov.au) |

## Appendix 2 - Events - Level 2 - Reporting Format

Email Content

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Subject | **Locality**  **Event Type**  **Event Level** |
| Event | **Copy of email**  **Copy of Incident Report**  **Relevant water quality performance data**  **Details of Event *(including cause of event, proposed duration, and any action taken to cease supply)***  **Additional background information**  **Proposed Actions and Timeframe *(including, for example,  proposed re-start procedures, flushing and how the water quality is to be validated and verified)*** |
| Email to | [wwalert@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:wwalert@health.wa.gov.au) |

## Appendix 3 - Department Contacts

#### Level 1 Notification

Managing Scientist – Water Unit

Environmental Health Directorate

Telephone: (08) 9222 2000 (business hours)

Emergency Duty Officer

Telephone: (08) 9328 0553 (after business hours, 24 hour service)

and

[wwalert@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:wwalert@health.wa.gov.au)

#### Level 2 Notification

[wwalert@health.wa.gov.au](mailto:wwalert@health.wa.gov.au)