

Understanding recycled water for the garden



What is recycled water?

Recycled water is treated wastewater that has undergone advanced treatment to produce water that is perfectly safe for uses such as washing machines, toilet flushing and irrigation. The advanced treatment process removes contaminants, viruses, bacteria and pathogens. The treatment process uses 'state of the art' technology and stringent monitoring to ensure the recycled water meets the requirements of the Australian Guidelines For Water Recycling and all criteria for health and safety. Council takes its responsibility to provide a high quality water supply to residents seriously and will ensure this recycled water meets community expectations.

Gardening with recycled water

Some things to consider when using recycled water in your garden include:

- Recycled water tends to be slightly saltier than drinking water. Watering to a point where the soil is thoroughly soaked is recommended to move water through the soil and flush salts from the root zone. Note: salt levels are still within Australian Drinking Water Guideline limits.



Did you know?

A large amount of domestic drinking water is used in the garden.

Using recycled water in the garden will reduce demand on drinking water supplies.

- Most Australian soils, including those found in the Port Macquarie-Hastings Local Government Area, are naturally low in nutrients. Recycled water has higher levels of nutrients like phosphorus and nitrogen than drinking water, so when watering take care not to overwater nutrient sensitive plants.
- The higher level of nutrients found in recycled water means the need for additional fertiliser may also be reduced.
- Recycled water is safe to use on fruit and vegetables, as long as you wash the garden produce with cool drinking water immediately before cooking or eating.

Helpful watering tips

- Water in the cooler parts of the day. Watering midway through the day increases water loss through evaporation and can cause leaf burn.
- Give deep waterings to the root zone rather than short shallow ones. One hour of deep watering a week should be adequate (twice a week in hot weather).
- Don't over-fertilise or overwater plants.
- Install a drip irrigation system. Drip irrigation is the most water efficient method of watering the garden. This will reduce evaporation (saving water) and keep moisture around the root zone where it's needed.
- Keep up water saving techniques. Recycled water is a precious resource and should not be wasted.
- If watering by hand, avoid watering the leaves and concentrate on the root zone of the plant as this saves water by reducing evaporation.



pmhc.nsw.gov.au/recycled-water

Call Council's Customer Service Centre on 6581 8111
or email council@pmhc.nsw.gov.au



The following plants in particular are well suited to recycled water use

- Acacia Longifolia
- Acacia suaveolens
- Acronychia oblongifolia southern
- Baloskion pallens
- Banksia ericifolia
- Banksia robur
- Baumea rubignosa
- Cabbage Tree Palm
- Callistemon pachyphyllus
- Casuarina glauca
- Coral Heath
- Cupaniopsis anacardiodes
- Didgery Sticks
- Dodonaea triquetra
- Dusky Coral Pea
- Epacris microphylla
- Eucalyptus robusta
- Golden Guinea-flower
- Golden Wattle
- Heath-leaved Banksia
- Hibbertia scandens
- Hop Bush
- Isolepis inundata
- Kennedia rubicunda
- Kunzea capitata
- Large-leaved Banksia
- Lemon Aspen
- Lemon Scented Tea Tree

- Leptospermum polygalifolium
- Livistona australis
- Pink Buttons
- Soft Twig-rush
- Swamp Club-rush
- Swamp Mahogany
- Swamp Oak
- Sweet Scented Wattle
- Tuckeroo
- Wallum Bottlebrush

Turf suited to recycled water

- Couches
- Blue Couch
- Kikuyu
- Salt Water Paspalum
- Nioaka
- Buffalo

Other plants

Other plants not listed above may also grow well on recycled water. Watch plants carefully and adjust water and fertiliser usage if necessary.

Talk to your local nursery for advice on plant selection for your garden.

Is using recycled water safe?

YES! Port Macquarie-Hastings Council is responsible for ensuring the recycled water is safe for its allowable uses.

For further information on recycled water safety, refer to our website pmhc.nsw.gov.au/recycled-water.

Did you know?

Keep up water saving measures – this not only saves water but is better for your garden.



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