

December 2009

What does this year hold for you?



Spring Gully Reservoir

Temporary Allocation Framework

Coliban Water has developed a Recycled Water Temporary Allocation Framework in order to establish a hierarchy of recycled water customers based upon a number of factors. Overall, the hierarchy of supply from the Recycled Water Factory to customers will now be based on the following categories:

Category 1:

Where the current use of water is not limited by Water Restriction By Law i.e commercial or industry.

Category 2:

Where the current use of water is limited by the Water Restriction By Law i.e commercial or industry (car washes and plant nurseries), standpipes, gardens, ovals, schools and sports clubs.

Category 3:

For urban amenity where a volume of rural licence is to be relinquished for a volume of recycled water via a pipeline connection.

Category 4:

For rural purposes where efficiency of supply is feasible and based upon a set allocation i.e rural customers for stock and domestic use (gardening and toilets).

Supply of recycled water will be in accordance with the hierarchy and dependant on inflows and production at the Recycled Water Factory.

This temporary framework will be reviewed after June 2010.



Customer obtaining water at Stanley Street Standpipe

Standpipes

Recycled water standpipe audits are underway. Carters may be requested to produce their registration card and tanker log sheets.

Rural Season 2009-2010

The Ascot and Axe Creek channel systems are supplied with recycled water and have been allocated 40% of their rural licence volume for the coming rural season.

All customers who received recycled water last year should have submitted their Annual Compliance Checklist in order to obtain water this season.

Leaks on channels can occur, and results in loss of this valuable resource. If you notice a leak or unexplained damp area next to a channel, please report it to Coliban Water on 1300 363 200.

Unfortunately, the Cockatoo Hill channel system will not have an allocation this season. The trial of recycled water to this system in 2008/09 was not successful, resulting in significant operational difficulties and losses.

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Salinity in recycled water

The salinity (salt content) of the recycled water that customers receive is slightly higher than the town water and raw water previously supplied. Most customers will not notice the difference or experience any impacts when irrigating lawns, gardens or pasture unless they have salt sensitive plant species or consistently water during the heat of the day.

The Recycled Water Factory produces the recycled water with the aim to supply a salinity level of approximately 500 mg/L (total dissolved solids). Salinity levels of town water supplies are generally in between 150 – 400 mg/L and raw water is generally in between 80 – 300 mg/L.

Potential impacts:

When irrigating plants during the heat of the day, salt in the recycled water can impact on plants and cause a 'burning' of the leaf tissue. This can be avoided by:

- watering in the early morning (before 10am) or in the evening (after 6pm);
- watering at the base of the plant and not on the leaves;
- using a drip irrigation system;
- knowing what plant species you have and their tolerance to salt.

Accumulation of salts in the soil can cause the plant to use more energy than necessary to get the water it requires.

This can be avoided by:

- only watering when the soil is dry;
- do not over water to cause pooling or run off of the recycled water;
- improve the soil drainage by adding organic matter or mixing in a potting mix.

Symptoms of salt damage:

Salt damage can be identified by:

- burning of the leaf tips or leaf margins which starts as yellowing of the edge and can then go brown/black;
- leaf shed and 'dieback' of growing tips;
- reduction in the growth of the plant.



Salt damage on vine leaf

Salt Sensitive plants:

Plants which are considered sensitive (dependant on soil type) to 500 mg/L total dissolved solids in recycled water are:

Fruit:

- Persimmon
- Passionfruit
- Strawberries
- Raspberries
- Apples
- Pears
- Stone Fruits
- Lemon
- Olives

Vegetables:

- Green beans
- Carrots
- Parsnips
- Onions
- Celery
- Peas
- Radish
- Squash
- Eggplant

Ornamental plants:

- Primula
- Fuchsia
- Gardenia
- Magnolia
- Begonia
- Rose
- Azalea
- Lily
- Violets

If you require more information on salinity, fruit, vegetable or plant salt tolerances, please contact our Recycled Water Officer.

If you wish to receive this newsletter electronically, please contact our Recycled Water Officer Liz Bateman on 1300 363 200 or email coliban@coliban.com.au