

Department of Environment
and Resource Management

Queensland Water Quality Guidelines 2009

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This document contains guidelines for the quality of waters of Queensland. It is consistent with and should be seen as an extension of the National Water Quality Management Strategy and the Australian and New Zealand Environment and Conservation Council (ANZECC) 2000 Guidelines for Fresh and Marine Water Quality.

Copies of the Queensland Water Quality Guidelines

Electronic (pdf) copies (including a full pdf) are available for download from the Department of Environment and Resource Management website <www.derm.qld.gov.au>.

Printed copies can be requested by submitting an email to the following email address: epa.ev@derm.qld.gov.au

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Information or comments on the guidelines

For further information or comments on the Queensland Water Quality Guidelines please contact:

Andrew Moss
Environment and Resource Sciences
Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management

Telephone: 07 3896 9245
Email to epa.ev@derm.qld.gov.au

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Foreword

Queensland's waters range from ephemeral inland streams to the great tidal rivers of the Wet Tropics. The state has a diverse network of streams and rivers, estuaries, wetlands, coastal bays and the World Heritage waters of the Great Barrier Reef.

All of these waters support diverse and essential ecosystems, but are, at the same time, subject to ever-increasing pressure to accommodate the various needs of the state's human population, including drinking water supply, agriculture and recreation.

Protecting the quality of the state's waters in the face of economic and population growth is a major priority for the Queensland Government.

National guidelines for water quality were published in 2000. These set benchmark values against which the quality of waters can be assessed. However, it is difficult for a national document to cover the vast range of water types found in Australia, and the national guidelines themselves recommend developing more regionally specific guidelines. The Queensland Water Quality Guidelines have been developed to deliver this regional focus.

Under the *Environmental Protection (Water) Policy 2009* the Queensland Water Quality Guidelines inform the setting of water quality objectives required to protect or enhance environmental values for Queensland waters. They also provide government and the general community (including catchment/water managers, regulators, industry, consultants and community groups) guidelines for assessing and managing ambient water quality.

The first major version of the Queensland Water Quality Guidelines was released in 2006, with minor updates released in 2007. This 2009 edition (version 3) includes updates and additional information, including a set of local water quality guidelines for the Mackay-Whitsunday region, which were developed by the region's NRM body. This version also provides linkages between the Queensland guidelines and the Great Barrier Reef Water Quality Guidelines recently drafted by the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority.

The Queensland Water Quality Guidelines will continue to be a dynamic document. New information on the state's waters will be progressively incorporated into future versions of the guidelines so that they remain an up to date technical resource to help protect and manage Queensland's waters.

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