

# Explanatory notes and instructions

## Drinking Water Quality: Incident Reporting

February 2011

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## Drinking Water Quality: Incident Reporting

*Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008—section 630*

These explanatory notes will assist drinking water service providers to complete the attached form—Drinking Water Quality: Incident Reporting. Part A of this form is to be completed and submitted to the regulator within 24 hours of you becoming aware of the incident, as required in the notice issued under the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* (the Act).

Note—this incident should have already been reported to the regulator by telephone, except for the detection of a parameter for which there is no guideline value in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG).

The terms and definitions, as defined in the Act and used in this form, are provided in Appendix A to these notes.

Before completing the form, you should familiarise yourself with the relevant sections of the legislation affecting your drinking water service. The legislation can be viewed at the Office of the Parliamentary Counsel website at [www.legislation.qld.gov.au](http://www.legislation.qld.gov.au).

To access an electronic copy of the Act:

1. Go to the website (this can be done by holding down the control key and clicking on the hyperlink above or manually typing in the address in the web browser)
2. Click on the Acts, SL as in force heading.
3. Click on W and scroll down the list of Acts to *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*.
4. Click on *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* to open the document. Note—as the document is in PDF format, you will need to have Acrobat Reader installed on your computer to view it.
5. Follow steps (2) to (4) to access other legislation or regulations.

Copies of Queensland Legislation are also available from the Queensland Government Bookshop—phone toll free 13 QGOV (13 74 68).

### Purpose of the Drinking Water Quality: Incident Reporting Form

Under a notice issued by the regulator or when an approved drinking water quality management plan is in place, drinking water service providers must report incidents that affect their drinking water quality within certain timeframes. The six types of incidents that require reporting are:

- detection of *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*)
- detection of a pathogen
- detection of chemical parameter that does not meet a health guideline value in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- detection of radioactivity exceeding gross alpha and gross beta screening values in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- detection of parameter for which there is no guideline value in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- an event or series of events likely to affect drinking water quality

This form is in two parts:

**Part A** is to be completed and submitted within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident occurring.

**Part B** is to be completed once the incident is resolved and should be submitted as soon as practicable after the resolution of the incident.

## Instructions for completing the form

Note—you are required to complete a separate form for each incident.

Where an incident may affect one or more locations in a drinking water scheme, it is considered one incident, e.g. *E. coli* detected at four locations in the reticulation system during the same sampling event.

This form can be completed by hand or electronically. If completing the form electronically, please note the PDF cannot be saved or emailed, and must be printed for signing. To submit the completed form electronically, the hard copy must be scanned and emailed as an attachment. Alternatively, the form can be submitted via fax or post.

If completing the form by hand, please:

- print neatly in BLOCK LETTERS
- use a black ballpoint pen only
- do not use correction fluid or tape
- initial any alterations
- ensure the relevant boxes are ticked and leave all other boxes blank
- complete all relevant sections of the form.

If additional information is to be provided, please use separate sheets and attach them to the form.

If completing the form electronically, please:

- ensure the relevant boxes are ticked and leave all other boxes blank
- complete all relevant sections of the form.

Should you have any queries when completing this form, please contact the Office of the Water Supply Regulator on 07 3247 0375 during business hours Monday to Friday.

### PART A

This part is to be completed and submitted within 24 hours of becoming aware of the incident.

Please tick one box beside the relevant incident:

- detection of *E. coli*
- detection of a pathogen
- detection of chemical parameter that does not meet a health guideline value in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- detection of radioactivity exceeding gross alpha and gross beta screening values in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- detection of parameter for which there is no guideline value in the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
- an event or series of events likely to affect drinking water quality.

## Completing Part A

### 1. Drinking water service provider details

#### Drinking water service provider

Please enter your registered service provider name as per the regulator's service provider register.

#### Service provider identification (SPID) number

Please enter your registered SPID number on the form in the boxes provided. Your SPID number can be obtained from the monitoring notice and/or previous correspondence.

#### Drinking water scheme

Please enter the name of the drinking water scheme to which this incident relates. The definition of a drinking water scheme is available in Appendix A.

### 2. Contact details (for this incident)

This is the first person who will be contacted by the regulator as an initial point of contact in relation to the incident.

Details to be provided include:

- the name of the contact person
- the title of the position occupied by the contact person within your organisation
- phone, fax and mobile numbers and postal and email address details of the contact person to enable the regulator to contact them.

#### **Details of telephone report to the regulator**

Please provide the name of the officer within the Office of the Water Supply Regulator you reported the incident to and the date and time the incident was reported to them.

#### **Have you informed any other organisation/agency about this incident?**

If you have notified any other person or organisation/agency, please provide their organisation/agency name, contact name, phone number and email address to enable the regulator to contact them if necessary.

### **3. Sample information**

#### **Initial sample**

This section requires the initial sample details to be provided to the regulator.

Information required includes:

- system location—raw/source water, treated water from water treatment plan, transmission or reticulation
- dates samples taken
- time samples taken
- parameter, i.e. water quality parameter(s) to which the incident relates (e.g. fluoride, *E. coli*)
- sample location i.e. specific location where sample was collected
- results of analysis—record the test result value (e.g. 1.7mg/L). For parameters that are reported as presence/absence, report the result. Note *E. coli* may be reported as positive however if available include the count e.g. 2 cfu/100mL
- date results were received
- laboratory name where analysis was undertaken.

#### **Follow-up sample(s)**

This section requires the follow-up sample details to be provided to the regulator.

Information required includes:

- whether follow-up samples have been taken? Please note that at least one follow up sample must be taken from the same location as the initial sample
- if yes, the expected timeframe for receipt of the results, including date and time
- if no, when follow-up samples are expected to be taken, including date and time.

### **4. Incident information**

This section requires the incident details to be provided to the regulator. A full description of the incident, including any events that led to the incident and the immediate impact of the incident should be provided.

If completing this form by hand and additional information is to be provided, please use separate sheets and attach them to the form.

## **5. Immediate corrective actions**

This section requires the details of immediate corrective action undertaken by the drinking water service provider to be provided to the regulator. If immediate corrective actions have taken place, describe when and how the corrective action took place. If immediate corrective actions have not been taken, describe reasons why.

If completing this form by hand and additional information is to be provided, please use separate sheets and attach them to the form.

## **6. Declaration**

This form is to be signed and dated on the day of completion by an officer with appropriate authority to sign on behalf of the drinking water service provider, prior to submitting it to the regulator. In signing this form you are declaring that the information is true and accurate.

## **7. Submission**

All hard copy or electronic forms of Part A are to be returned to the regulator by fax or email. The regulator's fax and email details are located on the form.

## Completing Part B

This section is to be completed when the incident is considered to be resolved. Part B should be submitted as soon as practicable after resolution of the incident.

### 1. Drinking water service provider details

#### Drinking water service provider

Please enter your registered service provider name as per the regulator's service provider register.

#### Service provider identification (SPID) number

Please enter your registered SPID number on the form in the boxes provided. Your SPID number can be obtained from the monitoring notice and/or previous correspondence.

#### Drinking water scheme

Please enter the name of the drinking water scheme to which this incident relates. The definition of a drinking water scheme is available in Appendix A.

### 2. Contact details (for this incident)

This is the first person who will be contacted by the regulator as an initial point of contact in relation to the incident. Details to be provided include:

- the name of the contact person
- the title of the position occupied by the contact person within your organisation
- phone, fax and mobile numbers and postal and email address details of the contact person to enable the regulator to contact them.

#### Details of telephone report to the regulator

Please provide the name of the officer within the Office of the Water Supply Regulator you reported the incident to and the date and time the incident was reported to them.

### Answering sections 3—7

The following sections are required to be answered to allow the regulator to be satisfied that the incident has been adequately resolved and no further action is required.

#### 3. What did you do to investigate the incident?

Describe all actions that were undertaken to investigate the cause of the incident (e.g. physical inspections of infrastructure, collection and analysis of additional water samples, gathering information from stakeholders, physical inspection of treated water storage reservoirs, analysis of disinfection residual, inspection of chlorinator).

#### 4. What did you find?

Describe the outcome of your investigation. Specifically focus on parts of the investigation that led to an understanding of the cause of the incident. Also describe parts of the investigation that did not provide answers to the cause of the incident. For example disinfection residual was below limit and inspection of chlorinator revealed that chlorine had run out, treated water storage reservoirs were intact with no evidence of contamination.

#### 5. What actions did you take to correct the problem?

Describe all actions undertaken to correct the cause of the incident (e.g. additional chlorination of the affected reservoir was undertaken and chlorination was restored).

#### 6. What actions did you take to prevent the incident occurring again?

Describe what you have done to prevent the incident occurring again. This could include both short-term actions and longer-term improvement planning (e.g. inspection of chlorinator/restocking schedule for chlorine has been amended to ensure chlorine will not run out. The need for automatic alarms on chlorinators has been considered and included in an improvement strategy).

**7. Provide evidence that demonstrates that the incident has been resolved**

List and describe any evidence you have that demonstrates the incident has been resolved. The type of evidence presented will vary depending upon the type of incident. This could include laboratory results, photographic evidence, workplace directives etc. (e.g. copies of *E. coli* laboratory results and disinfection residuals for all follow-up samples and a copy of a directive to amend inspection schedule).

**8. Declaration**

This form is to be signed and dated on the day of completion by an officer with appropriate authority to sign on behalf of the drinking water service provider, prior to submitting it to the regulator. In signing this form you are declaring that the information is true and accurate.

**9. Submission**

All hard copy or electronic forms of Part B are to be returned to the regulator by post, fax or email. The return post, fax and email details are located on the form.

## Appendix A

### Definitions from the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008* and terms used in the *Water Quality and Reporting Guideline for a Drinking Water Service*

**approved drinking water quality management plan** means a drinking water quality management plan approved by the regulator under Chapter 2, part 4, division 3.

**Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG)** provides advice on the types of parameters, monitoring methodology, sampling locations and sampling frequency that should be considered.

**current monitoring program** means a routine monitoring program for your drinking water scheme.

#### **drinking water—**

1. Drinking water means water, for human consumption, intended primarily as water for drinking, whether or not the water is used for other purposes.
2. Drinking water does not include—
  - (a) water that is food as defined under the *Food Act 2006*; or
  - (b) water taken or supplied for domestic purposes under the *Water Act 2000*.

**drinking water scheme**, means infrastructure owned by a drinking water service provider for single or multiple combinations of the individual components of treatment, transmission, reticulation, or the storage of recycled water to augment a drinking water supply.

**drinking water service** means a water service that is—

- (a) the treatment, transmission or reticulation of water for supply as drinking water; or
- (b) water collection in a water storage, if the water in the storage—
  - (i) includes recycled water, other than coal seam gas water; and
  - (ii) is used to augment a drinking water supply.

**drinking water service provider** means a water service provider for a drinking water service.

**Public Health Regulation** is the subordinate legislation to the *Public Health Act 2005* and is administered by Queensland Health.

**regulator** is the chief executive of the Department of Environment and Resource Management (the department).

**Service provider identification (SPID) number** is a number generated through the department's Water Industry Compliance Database (WICD) to identify the service provider.

**Water Quality and Reporting Guideline for a Drinking Water Service** is a regulatory guideline prepared by the regulator under the *Water Supply (Safety and Reliability) Act 2008*.

#### **water quality criteria—**

- (a) for drinking water, means all of the following—
  - (i) the standards for the quality of drinking water prescribed in a regulation under the Public Health Act;
  - (ii) the criteria stated in a guideline, if any, made by the regulator about the quality of drinking water;
  - (iii) the criteria for the quality of drinking water stated in a condition applying to a drinking water quality management plan.

**water service provider** means a person registered under Chapter 2, part 3, as a service provider for a water service.

### **s 20 Who must apply for registration as a service provider**

1. The following persons must, before starting to operate as the supplier of a water service, apply for registration as a service provider—
  - (a) a local government that owns infrastructure for supplying water or sewerage services;
  - (b) a water authority that owns infrastructure for supplying water or sewerage services;
  - (c) each person who is—
    - (i) the owner of 1 or more elements of infrastructure for supplying water or sewerage services for which a charge is intended to be made; or
    - (ii) if a person is nominated in a regulation as a related entity of a person mentioned in subparagraph (i)—the person nominated.

2. However, subsection (1) does not apply to a person who owns infrastructure that produces and supplies recycled water, or that supplies recycled water that is coal seam gas water, unless the person also owns other infrastructure for supplying a water or sewerage service.