**Queensland Water Directorate (*qldwater*)** ***e-*flash**

**Information for Water Industry Managers and Practitioners in the Queensland Water Industry**

**(Issue #288 – 3 June 2016)**

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**1**.   **Water of Origin 2016 – We Have a Winner!**

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Wednesday was great day for Queenslanders with the win over NSW in the State of Origin and with Queensland’s win over NSW in the Ixom Water of Origin Taste Test held at the WIOA Conference in Rockhampton.

Congratulations to our Queensland taste test winner, Barcaldine Regional Council which laid claim to the top drop title when delegates at the WIOA Conference gave its Barcaldine Scheme sample top scores, beating the 2016 NSW taste test winner, Nambucca Shire Council.  This will be a proud day for Barcy with the council being one of the strongest supporters of the taste test competition since its inception.

The Queensland regional taste test finals this year have been replaced by one Grand Final Queensland Water Taste Test event which is taking place at our Innovation Forum Technical Tour on 14 September 2016.  All water service providers are invited to come along and enter their best tasting tap water for a chance to compete against NSW in the Ixom Water of Origin next year.  More information on the Innovation Forum and Taste Test will be available soon.

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**2**.   **Award winners announced at WIOA conference**

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Each year we get to acknowledge the great people in our industry who go above and beyond the call of duty with the annual ***qldwater*** Operator of the Year (Civil/ Allrounder) and Young Operator of the Year awards announced at the Water Industry Operators Association of Australia (WIOA) Queensland Conference in Rockhampton yesterday.

### **Young Operator of the Year**

We congratulate Ben Pennell from the City of Gold Coast who took out the  2016 Young Operator of the Year at the Conference Awards dinner last night.

* Ben has demonstrated exceptional customer service going above and beyond in the interests of customers and promoting a positive image for his employer
* He is the Workplace Health and Safety representative for an operations team of approximately 50 field staff, drives implementation of new procedures, and effectively represents the team’s issues with management
* He developed new processes to support the roll out of iPads within the Works Management System and actively helped his team both adapt to the new technologies and the technologies to be relevant for the team.  He has completed Cert II, III and IV in water operations amongst others and will soon commence a Cert IV in construction supervision.

Ben receive an all-expenses paid trip to join the WIOA delegation on a tour of water and wastewater facilities in New Zealand in 2017 as well as attendance at the Water Industry Operations Group NZ conference in 2017.

**Civil/ Allrounder**

Unable to separate the achievements of these two great assets to our industry, the judges this year elected to present this award to two different operators.

Our first recipient was Matthew “Tractor” Weeks from Banana Shire Council.  He has been in his current role for only a few years, having previously worked with Council as a labourer, plumber and privately as a plumber.  Matthew has, among his many achievements in his current role:

* Introduced new technologies including a valve exercising trailer which led not only to a great proactive maintenance program but job crew redesign and efficiencies
* Changed procedures to improve council’s customer service and visibility in the community and led by example in completing jobs with a significant impact on customers
* Implemented new safety procedures including working with asbestos.

Our other award winner was Kent Weeden, from City of Gold Coast, whose attention is normally focussed on the achievements of his colleagues than his own.  His achievements in council are too many to list, so consider this a highlights reel:

* He has led cultural change in driving safety improvements as well as improving safety procedures
* He is a pragmatic technical expert sought out for his experience in new initiatives like the development of new manhole lids, and council’s sewer relining program
* He is a role model for ongoing professional development, operating at both the strategic and operational level, particularly with the Water Industry Worker program.  His advocacy has seen this initiative transform from training which was seen as an impost to a mature program where there is a constant waiting list, and he has persisted through a crazy amount of organisational change to keep the initiative going from strength to strength.

Tractor and Kent both receive a contribution towards professional development which could be used for opportunities such as training or attendance at conferences.

**AWA  Leon Henry Award**

Vern Atkinson from Cairns Regional Council was presented the AWA Leon Henry Operator of the Year Award.

Our congratulations to WIOA for another great event, all award winners on the night, and special thanks to Brad Milfull from Logan City Council and again Kent Weeden from City of Gold Coast for making the ***qldwater*** panel session on operational training a success.

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**3**.   **Water Connections Tour**

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From 16 to 20 May ***qldwater*** had the pleasure of hosting the Water Connections Week delegation to visit Hinchinbrook Shire Council, Palm Island Aboriginal Shire Council, Townsville City Council, Burdekin Shire Council, Whitsunday Regional Council and Mackay Regional Council.  The “tourists” included representatives from ***qldwater***, LGAQ, Departments of Energy and Water Supply, Environment and Heritage Protection, and Health, along with Townsville City Council.  A big thanks to our hosts and our Water Connections Tour sponsor, Dial Before You Dig.

With significant diversity in the places visited, a lot of different matters were discussed.  There was significant interest in regional collaboration, water security, compliance (especially environmental) and skilling and capacity.  Several councillors raised fluoridation, which had clearly been prominent around election time for their communities.

The major reason for this annual trip is to give members a chance to raise issues with senior government staff and to give those visitors a greater appreciation of what is needed to effectively deliver water and sewerage services.  It successfully achieved those objectives, as well as giving ***qldwater*** valuable input into projects and activities.  Particular thanks to Steve Gray and Mark Vis from Townsville City Council – losing a week from the day job is never easy but these gentlemen provided great advice and entertainment.  Some photos from the week are available on our [website](http://www.qldwater.com.au/Water_Connections_2016__Tour_Photos) including a few 360 degree images captured for those who may have access to VR viewers.

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**4.   NQ Conference & Technical Townsville 20 July – Registrations Now Open!**

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The ***qldwater*** North Queensland Conference (supported by WIOA) is being held in Townsville on 20 July 2016.  Registrations close on 4 July.

The conference is being held in conjunction with the Australian Water Association’s North Queensland Conference in Townsville which runs from July 21 to July 22.

***qldwater*** conferences are an informal opportunity for networking, updates on what’s impacting Queensland’s water and sewerage service providers, and technical presentations.  This full day conference features many excellent and informative presentations and runs from 9.30am until 5.00pm.  There is an option conference dinner being held the same evening.

We would like to thank our major sponsors – Dial Before You Dig and Ixom, our event Principal Sponsor – the Department of Energy and Water Supply, as well as our event silver sponsors Bilfinger Water Technologies, Lonza Water Treatment Technologies and Royce Water Technologies.

The full conference program and registration form with further details is available [here](http://www.qldwater.com.au/2016_NQ_Conference_Townsville).

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**5.   SewAus Sampling**

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The University of Queensland and partner universities in other Australian states are conducting a project:  Sew Aus which estimates per capita use and release of chemicals by wastewater analysis.  The aim of SewAus is to measure the (licit and illicit) use of and exposure to chemicals across the Australian population and the release of chemicals from WWTPs into the environment.

The sampling is planned for a week to include Census day (9 August) at STPs across Australia.  All service providers involved in the project will be de-identified to maintain STP confidentiality, but can access the results for their plants.

For more information, contact Sharon Grant 0488 238 017 or Jake O’Brien 0410 717 769 at Entox at the University of Queensland.   More information is also available on the flyer available [on our website.](http://www.qldwater.com.au/e-flashes-1/sewaus-sampling)

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**6.   Business Case Development Framework**

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Building Queensland has developed a suite of frameworks to assist in the development of quality business cases. These frameworks provide a consistent approach to major proposal development to ensure the Queensland Government gets value for its investment.

The frameworks will be reviewed and updated regularly to reflect industry best practice. Please refer to the website for the latest version when using the guides.

The Business Case Development Framework includes templates and guidance to support the development of strategic, preliminary and detailed business cases. It uses the Queensland Government’s Project Assessment Framework (PAF) as its foundation and then provides additional information that assists the development of business cases where Building Queensland is leading or assisting.

While we are not aware yet of a formal direction to adopt these guides for future state grant program applications (and they have been designed with very large projects in mind), we would expect that assessment of other grants will ultimately align with these approaches in some way.

More information and downloads of the Business Case Development Framework visit the Building Queensland [website](http://buildingqueensland.qld.gov.au/our-business/frameworks/).

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