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

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

**(Issue #305 –  13 December 2016)**

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Over the next few e-flashes we will be highlighting some of the work of ***qldwater*** and in particular the areas of investigation requested by our Technical Reference Group.  Some topics carry sensitivities, and so the detail will be limited, however please don’t hesitate to contact us if you’d like further information.

Please note, we have trialled various web forums and other ways of handling member technical queries without a lot of uptake.  However, in the background, there are a few active and enthusiastic email groups we can call on to help link you up with the expertise and experience of other members, if you are prepared to ask the questions.

Please contact Dave Cameron (dcameron@qldwater.com.au) if you have any queries.

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**1.   3rd Party Infrastructure on Reservoirs**

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The ***qldwater*** Technical Reference Group identified a number of issues relating to telecommunications installations on water infrastructure earlier in the year, and we have recently commissioned the development of a set of guidelines, in partnership with the NSW Water Directorate.  Risks including safe access to infrastructure and radiation are often front of mind, but as assets age, the risk to drinking water quality (e.g. holes from poor installations allowing contamination) increases.

The work will be undertaken by Murray Thomson with support from Aqualift.

NSW WD is also developing legal guidance and agreement templates for its members.  This is a costly exercise and the ***qldwater*** TRG accepted advice from various members that it would be best to invest our limited resources towards strong operational guidance materials and support for positive negotiations with telcos.  Federal telecommunications legislation is seen as very powerful and we are not aware of successful legal challenges.

When complete, the materials will include:

* A summary of the issues likely to be faced by water authorities when dealing with telecommunication equipment installations, the long term need to address and rectify these issues, and some practical examples of how water authorities can improve control of their sites and assets.
* A simple summary of relevant telecommunications, health and safety and drinking water legislation.
* Model guidelines, policies and procedures.
* Model installation requirements for telecommunications equipment.
* Practical content to support model site access and management agreements for telecommunications installations.
* Safe access to reservoir sites with telecommunications installations.

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**2.   ACCC Takes Court Action on “Flushable” Wipes**

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The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission has instituted proceedings in the Federal Court against Kimberly-Clark Australia and separately against Pental alleging that they each made false or misleading representations in relation to ‘flushable’ wipes they marketed and supplied in Australia.

The ACCC alleges that by labelling these products as “flushable”, consumers were led to believe that the products had similar characteristics to toilet paper, would break up or disintegrate in a timeframe and manner similar to toilet paper, and were suitable to be flushed down the toilet, when this was not the case. The ACCC alleges that the wipes were marketed as “*flushable*”, “*completely flushable*”, “*able to be flushed in the toilet*”, and able to “*break down in sewerage system or septic tank*”.

As service providers are well aware, these products do not disintegrate like toilet paper when flushed and many Australian water authorities still face significant problems when these products are flushed down the toilet as they contribute to blockages in household and municipal sewerage systems.

Read the full ACCC media release [here](https://www.accc.gov.au/media-release/accc-takes-court-action-on-%E2%80%9Cflushable%E2%80%9D-wipes).

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**3.   Sponsorship Update**

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Sponsorship opportunities for the 2017 ***qldwater*** events are filling fast.  We acknowledge the fact that these events would not be possible without the generous support of our sponsors who have signed up for next year:

Principal Sponsor - three regional conferences and supporting sponsor Innovation Forum – Aqseptence Group Pty Ltd

Gold Sponsor – three regional conferences and supporting sponsor Innovation Forum – Lonza Water Technologies

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Gold Sponsor – three regional conferences – Suez Australia and NZ

2017 Water Connections Tour sponsor – Dial Before You Dig

2017 Best of the Best Water Taste Test sponsor - Ixom

Silver and Dinner Sponsorships are still available for the regional conferences being held in Dalby, Yeppoon and Mackay and all levels of sponsorship are still available for the Innovation Forum in Brisbane in September.  More information on the 2017 events and the information package is available on our [website](http://www.qldwater.com.au/events).

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**4.   QUICK LINKS – ASSOCIATED ORGANISATIONS EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

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The Department of Energy and Water Supply have released the first edition of their online newsletter “The Refill”.  The Refill will be published three times a year to provide an update on DEWS projects - developments, implementation, regulatory information and news on upcoming events.  To subscribe please email: SPI@dews.qld.gov.au.

The Water Services Association of Australia’s latest Research Newsletter features some important and interesting research and innovation articles.  The newsletter is available [here](http://waterservicesassociationofaustralia.cmail19.com/t/ViewEmail/j/9B54D5B49F72452C/B44D2BAB988A87A563B21DE8DA818551).

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