

# Clothes washing with Class A recycled water

## Following the successful trial of Class A recycled water for clothes washing, Western Water's Board has approved the use of recycled water in the laundry in estates with dual supply.

In many new residential estates in Western Water's service region, Class A recycled water is currently used for residential garden watering, toilet flushing, fire protection, irrigation of public land and food crops.

The use of Class A recycled water for clothes washing has been approved by the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) and the Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). This use is already implemented in different regions across Australia.

### Why wash clothes with recycled water?

Washing machines account for approximately 23% of total household water usage.

For this reason, using recycled water reduces pressure on our drinking water supplies and could save up to 45 litres of drinking water per person, per day.

In addition, recycled water is not subject to rising block tariffs so using recycled water can save you money on your water bill.

### What should I expect when I wash my clothes with Class A recycled water?

You should not notice any difference washing clothes with Class A recycled water compared with drinking water.

To ensure the best outcomes, customers should use CHOICE

recommended laundry detergents and regularly clean their washing machine as per the manufacturer's instructions.

### Who now has access to Class A recycled water in the laundry?

All homes in dual supply areas can use Class A recycled water for clothes washing.

Since January 2014, all new homes in Eynesbury have had a Class A recycled water tap installed in the laundry to ensure the success of the trial.

From January 2016, any new home built in Western Water's service area in a residential estate with dual water supply (i.e. both drinking water and recycled water) will be fitted with a Class A recycled water tap in the laundry.

Typically these homes will have a third purple tap alongside the hot and cold washing machine taps in the laundry.

To prevent accidental misuse, recycled water is not plumbed to any laundry sink taps.

### What about people who already live in a dual supply estate but do not have a recycled water tap in the laundry?

Owners of existing homes in dual supply areas can install a recycled water laundry tap at their own expense.



## Handy tips

Follow the manufacturer's guidelines for regularly cleaning your washing machine.

Use CHOICE recommended washing detergent.

Follow your garments' washing instructions.

Contact Western Water on 1300 650 422 if you have any questions about your water supply.

Like Western Water on Facebook and follow us on Twitter for instant updates on your water supply.

## What happened in the trial?

A total of 28 customers in Eynesbury participated in the Class A for clothes washing trial over 2014 and 2015.

They provided detailed feedback on their experience using recycled water in the laundry via a series of surveys.

In their most recent feedback, 82% of trial participants were supportive of using recycled water for clothes washing and the majority will continue to use recycled water following the trial.

## Did the trial find any issues with recycled water for clothes washing?

A few customers registered concerns about the odour of recycled water.

Western Water has addressed this through improvements to the treatment process at the recycled water plant.

## Is recycled water suitable for washing baby's clothes and valuable or delicate items?

Yes. Class A recycled water is suitable for washing all items.

While recycled water contains more nutrients than drinking water, this should not be an issue when washing clothes, especially when using CHOICE recommended laundry detergents or powders.

## Are there any health impacts from washing my clothes in recycled water?

No. The Department of Health and Human Services and the Environment Protection Authority have approved the use of Class A recycled water for clothes washing.

The quality of Class A recycled water is guaranteed through the automation of our recycled water plant.

If the monitored quality is ever outside the agreed Class A levels, supply of Class A water will shut down.



## The recycled water in my toilet is sometimes discoloured. Will this affect my clothes wash quality?

No. You should not notice any difference washing clothes with Class A recycled water, compared with drinking water.

Class A recycled water contains nutrients, which when left sitting for long periods, such as in a pond or an unused toilet, can cause algae growth.

As washing machines have constant water movement, along with the added benefits of detergents, you should see

no difference to your clothes wash quality.

Regularly cleaning your washing machine as per the manufacturer's instructions will help prevent odour issues or other negative impacts on washing machines.