

Potential supply of Class A recycled water to Aintree

In June 2021, we invited community members to share their concerns and attitudes about the potential supply of Class A recycled water to properties in Aintree. We also asked how they'd like to be kept informed.

We received input from community members through our online consultation site as well as at online community sessions.

This fact sheet provides a summary of what we heard from the community, answers to key questions raised, and outlines the next steps.

What we heard

We heard the community are mostly positive about recycled water. Some are looking forward to using recycled water around the home to do their bit for the environment.

Some people expressed concern about the timing of the connection and how recycled water might be charged in the future.

We also heard the community would like more information about recycled water and to be kept updated about Class A supply.

Next steps

- All feedback received will form the basis of an engagement findings report.

- We will share this report with the Greater Western Water Board and management team who will use it to inform their decision making.

- A summary of the report will be available on yoursay.gww.com.au along with any decisions made.

- We'll also communicate any decisions to homes within the estate.

Questions and answers

Why were purple pipes installed when recycled water supply wasn't available?

Across our service region, there are many new housing estates that have been developed with sustainability in mind. It is much easier and cost-effective to install alternative water infrastructure in an estate as it is being built, rather than excavate and install pipes and meters at a later stage.

Why is it taking so long to supply Class A recycled water to my estate?

We must carefully plan and

prioritise our infrastructure projects to keep prices affordable for all our customers. We also have a very long-term vision. What we put in the ground today may still be in operation in 40 or 50-years' time.

When planning the timing of infrastructure projects we consider:

- population growth, level of demand and the stage of the development of new estates to ensure there are sufficient customers to make the service financially viable

- other projects in the area that may enable related infrastructure and supply to be available cost-effectively, and

- location of new estates to financially viable supply solutions in terms of access to infrastructure like supply pipes and a suitable water supply from a treatment plant.

We regularly review and assess planning and infrastructure requirements for the estates with recycled water

infrastructure as well as the best time to supply recycled water to them.

Hearing from the community will help inform this planning.

What is required to supply Class A recycled water to my estate?

Class A recycled water is available from the Melton Recycled Water Plant. However, to supply this to Aintree, we need to build a 5 km pipeline to connect to the nearest recycled water supply main.

When would it be possible to have recycled water supply?

Given the infrastructure required to connect the estate to the recycled water supply, we estimate that the earliest it could be supplied to Aintree would be in 2023.

Customers will be notified well in advance when a decision to connect to recycled water is made.

Why are some properties in my suburb set up for recycled water whilst others are not?

The Western Water Class A recycled water servicing policy was amended in 2017 to no longer mandate the installation of dual reticulation systems in new estates.

However, new housing developments are required to plan sustainable, integrated water management solutions when building new houses. Whether properties are set up for Class A supply remains an option for developers - along with other measures such as installing water tanks.

When will a decision be made as to whether we will get a recycled water supply?

The information gathered through our consultation with customers will be shared with GWW's Board and management as they plan for the future of recycled water in the region.

We cannot commit to when a decision will be made but we will ensure the outcomes of this process are reported back to the Board as a matter of priority and keep the community informed.

Will landowners need to pay for the infrastructure required to connect the estate to the recycled water supply?

No. Landowners will not need to contribute to the cost of any of the works required to connect Class A recycled water to their estate from the Melton Recycled Water Plant.

Am I being charged for Class A recycled water?

No. Because recycled water is not being supplied to your property, you are not being charged either the recycled water service availability charge or for recycled water usage.

Until recycled water is supplied through the purple pipes, drinking water will be supplied through both meters and you will be charged drinking water usage charges for all the water you use.

Will having Class A recycled water cost me more?

Under our current pricing approach, customers will receive an additional service availability

charge for recycled water supplies when it is available to their property. Recycled water usage charges will also apply.

For customers in the region previously serviced by Western Water (which includes Aintree), the annual service charge has been set at \$116.91 for the year beginning 1 July 2021 and the usage charge has been set at \$1.8882 per kilolitre, which is set below the price charged for drinking water.

We're considering the level of these charges under GWW as we plan for our next Price Submission, with revised prices to come into effect from 1 July 2023.

We have shared the community's feedback about Class A recycled water with the price submission team and will share opportunities with customers for how you can get involved in price submission engagement activities.

If a recycled water supply is further delayed or not connected will I be reimbursed the costs associated with having Class A infrastructure at my property?

We believe Class A supplies will be available to properties in your estate so are not considering the suggestion of compensating customers for Class A infrastructure costs.

Installing Class A infrastructure in new estates with the intention of supplying alternative water in the future is an investment in sustainable water management for the region.