



Gold Coast Water and Waste

Protecting our most valuable assets

Water Recycling

Breaking the Myths

The City of Gold Coast (City) has developed systems and treatment processes to effectively and responsibly manage water recycling, reuse and release.

Residents and businesses on the Gold Coast produce over 155 million litres of sewage each day.

As the population of the Gold Coast increases annually, so does water use and sewage flow - so where does it all go?

There are many misconceptions about where it all ends up so it's time to bust these myths open.

MYTH 1 Recycled water is sewage.

Sewage is water that carries waste from areas in your home and business such as the kitchen, laundry and bathroom.

Sewage primarily consists of water and a small fraction of solids. The treatment process removes those solids along with dissolved contaminants and is disinfected before being reused or released.

MYTH 2 Recycled water is not treated.

Water that is reused is treated to a standard that is 'fit for purpose' in accordance with the *Public Health Act (2005)*.

For more information

P 1300 GOLDCOAST (1300 465 326)

W cityofgoldcoast.com.au

MYTH 3 Recycled water is not reused.

Around 20 per cent of water collected in the sewerage network is recycled and reused by customers on the Gold Coast for approved purposes. These include:

- irrigation of crops and public open spaces (including golf courses and parks)
- approved commercial, construction and industrial uses.

The remaining is released into the ocean at the Gold Coast Seaway on each outgoing tide.

Recycled water is carefully treated and tested before release to ensure it is not harmful to the environment, in accordance with licences issued by the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection (EHP).

MYTH 4 We don't need to recycle water, we have enough.

The City provides water and sewerage services to more than half a million people and more than 10,000 businesses on the Gold Coast, producing approximately 155 million litres of sewage each day. This then goes through the treatment process to produce recycled water.

While our dams are susceptible to drought conditions, recycled water is climate resilient. By using recycled water for the approved purposes, drinking water is conserved.

MYTH 5 Non-drinking water is recycled for drinking.

Water is not recycled for drinking. It is only approved for specific non-drinking uses such as golf course, sporting field, nurseries and public parkland irrigation, as well as dust suppression on construction and development sites across the Gold Coast.

MYTH 6 You can tell the difference between drinking and non-drinking water by looking at it.

Drinking and non-drinking water can look and smell the same. It is often only through detailed laboratory analysis that you can tell them apart.

MYTH 7 You can't tell the difference between drinking and non-drinking water taps.

Non-drinking water is supplied in separate systems to drinking water and the pipes are coloured a distinctive purple to identify this. Signage is also used to indicate the presence of non-drinking water. Non-drinking water should only be used for approved purposes.



MYTH 8 Sewage treatment plants release into adjacent creeks and rivers.

Following treatment in accordance with EHP licence requirements, treated water from all sewage treatment plants is pumped to the Gold Coast Seaway for release on each outgoing tide. This includes Elanora Sewage Treatment Plant which does not release into Tallebudgera Creek.

MYTH 9 Sewage is released to the ocean.

Definitely not. Only recycled water that has passed a multitude of treatment steps and tests enters the ocean.

MYTH 10 Reusing water is dangerous.

The sewage treatment process removes harmful pathogens so that the water can be reused or released safely to the environment. However, water should only be reused for approved purposes.

Please visit cityofgoldcoast.com.au/recycledwater for information on our sewage treatment processes.