

## Department of Environment

### Public Drinking Water Resource Policy No 1 of 2004

#### Policy title: *Land use compatibility in Public Drinking Water Source Areas*

#### Introduction

The Department of Environment is the State Government agency responsible for the management, protection and enhancement of Western Australia's natural water resources. The Department presently operates as the amalgamation of the Water and Rivers Commission and the Department of Environmental Protection.

This document states the Department's position on the topic described in the policy title. This policy is primarily for departmental use. While it does not bind the Minister for the Environment or other agencies of the Government of Western Australia, it has been accepted by the West Australian Planning Commission (WAPC) as the basis for its Statement of Planning Policy No 2.7 *Public Drinking Water Source Policy* and was used in several Land Use and Water Management Strategies.

#### Objective

To define the strategy used by the Department to ensure that land uses established within proclaimed Public Drinking Water Source Areas (PDWSAs) do not create an unacceptable risk to water source quality. This strategy is aligned with the National Health and Medical Research Council's national framework for the management of drinking water quality.

#### Policy statements

1. The Department of Environment supports the use of the Water Quality Protection Note [Land Use Compatibility in Public Drinking Water Source Areas](#) as its position on rezoning, subdivision and or land development in all catchment areas that are a surface or underground source of public drinking water supplies.
2. In the event of any dispute arising in relation to the use of this policy, the issue shall initially be referred to the policy custodian (see below) for resolution.
3. The Executive of the Department at its discretion may grant dispensations from application of this policy.
4. A copy of the present approved Water Quality Protection Note (June 2004) is attached.

#### Supporting rationale

This Water Quality Protection Note has been developed to define land use acceptability in drinking water catchments on the basis of potential risk of contamination to water resources. It has been collated on the basis of the professional judgement of senior staff responsible for the protection of public water supply catchments. It is intended to provide authority, clarity and consistency in decision-making related to land use in public drinking water source areas. This note provides information on the Department of Environment's operational strategy to protect drinking water resource quality. It is compatible with the operational framework described in the *Australian Drinking Water Guidelines 1996 (as currently updated in 2003)*.

This Water Quality Protection Note is used to support the implementation of the department's Water Source Protection Plans and the Western Australian Planning Commission's Land Use and Water Management Strategies. It is acknowledged in the WAPC's Statement of Planning Policy 2.7 that guides land use decision-making by local governments in PDWSAs. The implementation of the land use restrictions was recommended and acknowledged respectively in the reviews of Perth's drinking water management by Legislative Council committees in the years 1994 and 2000.

The content of this Note is regularly reviewed and amended on the basis of feedback and experience with its use. The note is not to be applied retrospectively and recognises there will be established land uses in catchments that do not conform to this policy, and that may remain operating provided they operate in a lawful manner.

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**Policy definitions**

"Public Drinking Water Source Areas" is the collective description for Water Reserves, Catchment Areas and Underground Water Pollution Control Areas declared under the provisions of the *Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act 1909* or *Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947*.

**Policy applicability**

This policy applies within all gazetted public water supply source areas within Western Australia. It will also be used to underpin departmental advice on land use within future public drinking water source areas.

**This policy is intended to compliment, support and interpret the provisions of the following statutes and their associated Regulations and By-laws:**

- *Metropolitan Water Supply, Sewerage and Drainage Act 1909*
- *Country Areas Water Supply Act 1947*

**Other related policies and relevant references:**

*State Water Quality Management strategy* (Framework 2001 and Status Report 2003).

**Policy commencement**

On the date of approval by the Director General.

**Term of this policy**

This policy remains in force until amended or rescinded at the discretion of the Director General; it is made redundant by changes to the relevant statutes, or by change to Departmental responsibilities.

**Policy implementation:**

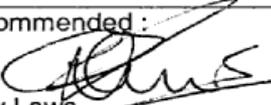
This policy defines the department's position on the stated topic. Officers or employees of the department shall not take contrary positions without the written consent of the Director General.

**Policy custodian:**

Any feedback or requests for interpretation of this policy should be directed to the policy custodian:

Manager, Water Source Protection Branch  
Resource Management Division  
Department of Environment  
3 Plain Street  
East Perth WA 6004

Copies of this policy may be obtained from the policy custodian, the Department's Communications Branch, or the Internet site: [www.drinkingwater.environment.wa.gov.au](http://www.drinkingwater.environment.wa.gov.au) under *Policy and Legislation*.

<p>Recommended:</p>  <p>Tony Laws Manager, Water Source Protection Date: 9/3/04</p>  <p>Don McFarlane Director, Resource Management Date: 22.06.04</p>	<p>Approved for implementation:</p>  <p>Derek Carew Hopkins A/ Director General Department of Environment Date: 13/7/04</p>
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