

Tasmania's Water and Sewerage

THE FACTS

“Local councils have sacrificed investment in our water and sewage infrastructure for a long time, in order to pay themselves dividends.”

Tasmania's Treasurer 2017

Background

Tasmania's enviable reputation for having a clean and safe environment is being put at risk by local government's inability to ensure all Tasmanians have access to clean and safe drinking water and our wastewater systems comply with environmental standards.

Owned by Tasmania's 29 local councils, TasWater was established by the former Labor-Green Government in response to several years of controversy surrounding the operations of Ben Lomond Water, Cradle Mountain Water, Southern Water and Onstream.

Despite the obvious and urgent need for substantial investment in water and sewage infrastructure, 25 towns remain on Boil Water or Do Not Consume alerts and only one of Tasmania's 78 Level Two sewage plants is 100 per cent compliant with EPA discharge to waters limits.

The fact is local councils have sacrificed investment in our water and sewage infrastructure for a long time, in order to pay themselves dividends.

From 2009 to the end of TasWater's current 10-year plan, local councils will receive almost \$400 million in distributions from TasWater. That's money from TasWater that is not being reinvested in desperately needed upgrades to infrastructure.

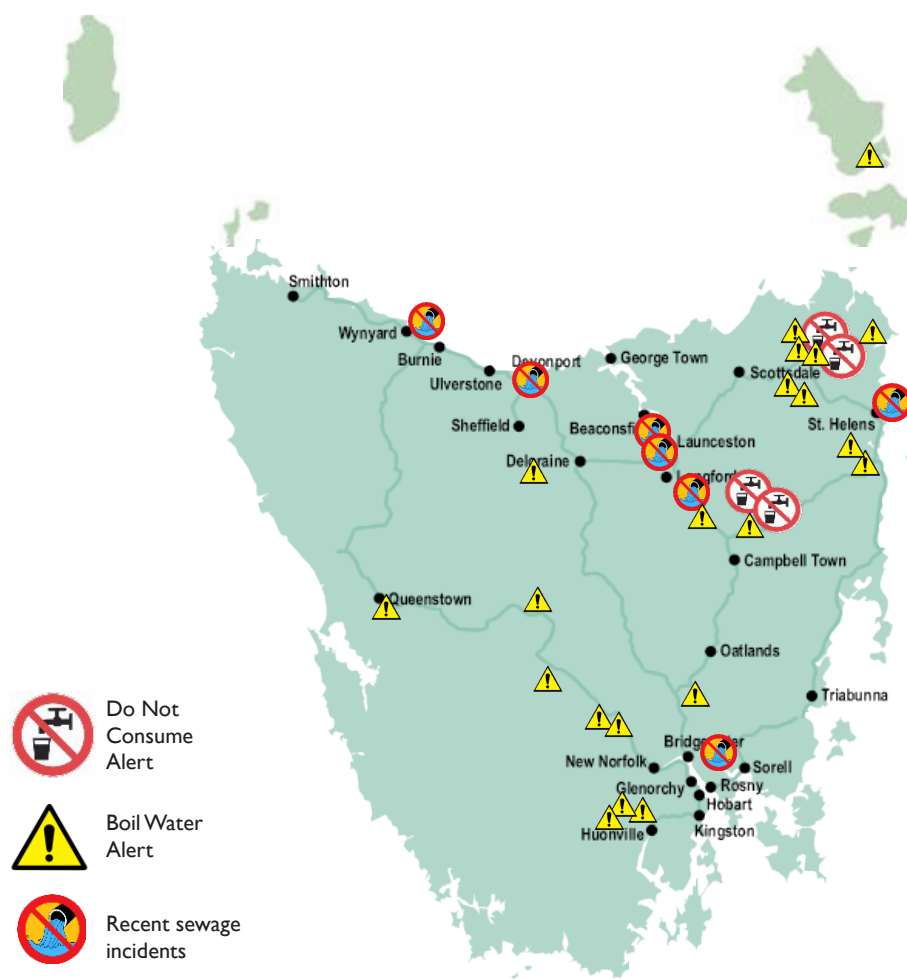
While TasWater's Board did take the extraordinary step last year to override their local council owners and reduce dividends to them to help increase spending on infrastructure, it's not enough and they need to do more.

Councils are failing in their fundamental duty to ensure TasWater delivers safe drinking water and sewage services. Tasmanians expect and deserve better.

- In each of the last four years, more than 20 towns have been on Boil Water or Do Not Consume water alerts.
- TasWater's sewage treatment plant compliance with regulatory discharge to water limits has steadily declined since 2009.
- In 2014-15, only one (Somerset) of TasWater's 78 Level 2 Wastewater Treatment Plants was fully compliant with regulatory discharge to waters limits.
- More than two-thirds of Level 2 sewage plants are less than 90% compliant with regulatory discharge to water limits.
- TasWater's rate of sewer overflows to the environment is seven times the national average.
- Unplanned interruptions to water supply have increased.
- Economic and Environmental regulatory reports have repeatedly stated concerns about under-investment by TasWater.

Do Not Consume/Boil Water Notice

Tasmanian towns operating with Do Not Consume/Boil Water Notices or public health alerts at 3/3/17



Current Boil Water Advice

1. Branxholm Boil Water Alert
2. Bronte Park Boil Water Alert
3. Colebrook Boil Water Alert
4. Conara Boil Water Alert
5. Cornwall Boil Water Alert
6. Derby Boil Water Alert
7. Epping Forest Boil Water Alert
8. Fentonbury, Westerway and National Park temporary Boil Water Alert
9. Gladstone Boil Water Alert
10. Gormanston Boil Water Alert
11. Gretna Boil Water Alert
12. Herrick Boil Water Alert
13. Judbury Boil Water Alert
14. Lady Barron Boil Water Alert
15. Legerwood Boil Water Alert
16. Mathinna Boil Water Alert
17. Mole Creek Boil Water Alert
18. Mountain River Boil Water Alert
19. Ringarooma Boil Water Alert
20. Rocky Creek supply Boil Water alert
21. Wayatinah Boil Water Alert

Public Health Alerts - Do Not Consume

1. Avoca - Do Not Consume Alert
2. Pioneer - Do Not Consume Alert
3. Rossarden - Do Not Consume Alert
4. Winnaleah - Do Not Consume Alert



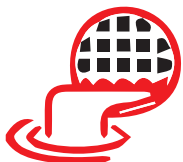
Drinking Water Compliance

Towns operating with “Do Not Consume/Boil Water” notices or public health alerts

Year	Current (at 16/2/17)	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
Number of Towns	25 4 - Do not Consume 21 - Boil Water	23	26	26
Source	TasWater website	TasWater 2015-16 Annual Report	TasWater 2015-16 Annual Report	TasWater 2014-15 Annual Report

Bacteriological compliance of drinking water supply systems (per cent of systems)

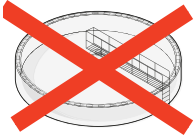
Year	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11
% compliant	72%	76%	76%	68%	60%
Source	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15



Sewer Overflows

The rate of sewer overflows to the environment across Tasmania is high compared to the national average - around 0.5 per 100 kilometres of sewer main in 2014-15.

Year	National Rate	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11
No. reported		164	645	178	173	235
Sewer overflows (per 100 km of sewer main)	0.5	3.5	14.3	3.9	3.7	5.7
Source	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15



Wastewater Compliance

% of treated volume fully compliant with EPA requirements

Year	2015-16	2014-15	2013-14
Percentage	44%	46%	42%
Source	TasWater 2015-16 Annual Report	TasWater 2015-16 Annual Report	TasWater 2014-15 Annual Report

Number of Level 2 sewage treatment plants 100% compliant with regulatory discharge to water limits. Level 2 are larger wastewater treatment plants. TasWater operates 78* around the State.

Year	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
No. compliant	1 of 78	5 of 79	6 of 79
Source	EPA Annual Report 2015-16	EPA Annual Report 2015-16	EPA Annual Report 2014-15

* In 2014-15 the Taroona WWTP was decommissioned.

Overall rate of Level 2 sewage treatment plant compliance with regulatory discharge to water limits.

Year	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13	2011-12	2010-11	2009-10
% compliant	81.4%	84.3%	85.2%	88.5%	89.2%	91.5%
Source	EPA Annual Report 2015-16	EPA Annual Report 2015-16	EPA Annual Report 2015-16	EPA Annual Report 2015-16	EPA Annual Report 2015-16	EPA Annual Report 2015-16



Water main breaks

Unplanned interruptions to water supply.

Year	2014-15	2013-14	2012-13
No. of unplanned interruptions	6007	4451	3513
No. of customers affected	33,352	28,286	23,382
Source	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15	OTTER State of the industry report 2014-15

Key Quotes

Tasmanian Water and Sewerage State of the Industry Report 2013-14 (Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator)

- *Nineteen drinking water supply systems operated with a permanent boil water alert in 2013-14 and six temporary boil water alerts were issued.*
- *Service and reliability was impacted by the age and condition of the water and sewerage network, with a high number of unplanned interruptions to the water supply.*
- *There was also a high number of sewer main breaks and chokes and a high rate of sewer overflows, indicating that significant investment is still required in the sewerage network.*
- *Disappointingly, environmental compliance has not improved. The environmental impact of wastewater on the State's rivers and coastal waters continues to be of concern, with effluent containing significant organic loads, elevated nutrients and faecal bacteria concentrations discharged to the environment.*
- *Compliance with treated effluent against regulated discharge to waters limits has steadily declined since July 2009, when responsibility for the management of wastewater infrastructure was transferred firstly to the previous regional corporations and subsequently to TasWater. TasWater lags well behind its mainland counterparts in relation to regulated discharge limits.*
- *In addition to concerns about the quality of treated effluent discharged by the State's wastewater treatment plants (WWTPs), instances of raw sewage being released through sewer breaks and overflows are having a negative impact on the receiving environment.*

Key Quotes cont.

EPA Annual Report 2013-14

“The improvement of our almost universally inadequate sewage treatment infrastructure has continued to be a strong focus. Progress continues to fall well short of hopes and expectations for a variety of reasons including inadequate investment in recent years. The formation of a single state wide organisation in TasWater should see that situation improve more readily from here on but the patience of the regulator can only be stretched so far, particularly when dividends are being paid to owners rather than invested in infrastructure and operations. More acceptable progress is expected this year.”

Tasmanian Water and Sewerage State of the Industry Report 2014-15 (Office of the Tasmanian Economic Regulator)

- ...26 towns operated with restrictions on the safe use of their drinking water.
- Overall, 1.4 per cent of Tasmania’s serviced population did not receive safe drinking quality water that met microbiological standards. This result is significantly poorer than for mainland jurisdictions where full microbiological compliance was achieved.
- ...TasWater is yet to fully implement its monitoring program and ten drinking water systems were not adequately monitored during 2014-15.
- Service and reliability were impacted by the age and condition of the water and sewerage network, with a high number of unplanned interruptions to the water supply.
- There were also a high number of sewer main breaks and chokes and a high rate of sewer overflows, indicating that significant investment is still required in the sewerage network.
- In some areas, existing wastewater infrastructure was not adequately coping with demand.
- 12 of TasWater’s wastewater treatment plants had inflows that exceeded their hydraulic capacity....
- ...there continued to be a number of instances of raw sewage being released to the environment through sewer breaks and overflows.
- Again, these outcomes resulted from prolonged under investment in sewerage networks and treatment facilities across the State as well as unsatisfactory operating practices and inadequate maintenance.
- ...compliance with regulatory discharge limits has steadily declined over the past five years.
- TasWater’s operating costs per property were higher than mainland providers whose levels of compliance were greater than TasWater’s.

EPA Annual Report 2015-16

“... compliance with discharge to water limits has gradually decreased since the hand-over of the sewerage infrastructure from local councils to the regional water corporations (1 July 2009) and then TasWater (since 1 July 2013).”

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