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HHSD/18/66803

Veronica Lanigan
SEPP Waters Manager
Department of Environment, Land, Water and Planning
Level 10, 8 Nicholson Street
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Dear Veronica,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback on the SEPP Waters draft policy. I commend you and your team in the drafting of the SEPP Waters and supporting documents.

The SEPP Waters is an important influence on the need to protect and improve the quality of Victoria's waters, which is paramount to public health outcomes for all Victorians. Victoria's drinking water catchments need ongoing protection and the SEPP should be explicit in this requirement. A whole of government approach should be taken to ensure recreational areas do not create new risks to drinking water quality and where practicable act to reduce risks to water from recreational activities where they currently occur in or around water storages.

Please find the proposed revisions in the attached table. We look forward to continuing to work with you to address the incorporation of these proposed revisions in the SEPP Waters to ensure adequate protection of public health.

Yours sincerely

Suzie Sarkis
Manager, Water
Regulation, Health Protection and Emergency Management

19 /6 / 2018

Clause	Proposed change
16. Beneficial uses of surface water (2c) i & ii	Reword as follows: c) <i>human consumption after appropriate treatment</i> applies to those surface water segments – i) in a declared special water supply catchment area; and/or, ii) where water is sourced from a catchment for supply in accordance with the Safe Drinking Water Act 2003 . (apply these changes to Table 3)
21. Application for wastewater discharges	3) Reword as follows: The Authority will require an application for the discharge of wastewater to surface waters to include a human health and ecological risk assessment that considers cumulative impacts in accordance with guidance provided by the Authority.
22. Consideration of applications for wastewater discharges 1) When assessing an application to discharge wastewater to surface waters, the authority must have regard to the -	Strengthen the application of the waste hierarchy by requiring the following: e) priority is given to avoiding the generation of wastewater discharges and that all practical options to achieve this have been considered.
24. Use of offset measures to protect beneficial uses	Strengthen wording so that it is explicit that offsets cannot be applied to hazards (such as pathogenic microorganisms) that impact on human health.
29. Councils to develop a domestic wastewater management plan	DHHS is very supportive of the strengthening of the requirements for council to develop a wastewater management plan, including inclusion of cumulative risks in the assessment of onsite domestic wastewater systems in (4a) Include additional requirement with the following wording: council accredited assessors to review Land Capability Assessment (LCA)
Explanatory notes: page 32 Paragraph 2, Sentence 3	Change sentence to: By restricting public access, water quality can be maintained to reduce risk to human health and reduce treatment costs.
33. Protecting catchment areas used to supply water	2) Add the words to the end of this clause “to prevent environmental and human health impacts” Strengthen the need to protect drinking water catchments used to supply water by adding additional point: 3) No increase in recreation, in and around water storages that are sources for drinking water supply. Recreational activities including water based recreation (primary and secondary contact) at water storages that are used for drinking water supply pose an increased risk to public health.
38. Management of recreational activities	DHHS fully supports the need for 4) protection agencies must, so far as practicable, implement measures to prohibit, manage or control recreational activities that pose a risk to beneficial uses.

51 (4). Waste and wastewater from ports, marinas and vessels	<p>Clause 4 is not applicable and Clauses 1, 2 and 3 should equally apply to houseboats on Lake Eildon to minimise impacts on beneficial uses.</p> <p>The Water (Lake Eildon Recreational Area) (Houseboats) Regulations 2013 initially included requirements for all houseboats to have an onboard greywater treatment system installed by 2020. This requirement was repealed in 2017. Around 80 out of over 700 houseboats have installed a greywater treatment system. The repeal of this treated greywater requirement in the regulations was not supported by DHHS as the discharge of untreated greywater into Lake Eildon increases risk to human health, and contributes to degradation of Lake Eildon water quality which impacts upon downstream drinking water quality.</p>
Schedule 2: Beneficial Uses Table 1: Beneficial uses for water	<p>Change the definitions for:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'human consumption after appropriate treatment' and potable water supply' to water that is of a quality suitable for drinking' • 'Potable mineral water supply' to 'mineral water supply'
Schedule 2: Beneficial Uses Table 5: Exclusions to beneficial uses in surface waters	<p>For the Water based recreation beneficial use, aquatic reserves segment:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i) include Cardinia and Parks Victoria ii) water storages that are used for drinking water supply <p>For the beneficial use - Human consumption of aquatic foods: Specify the legislation that requires approved fisheries management plans</p>
Schedule 3: Environmental Quality Indicators and Objectives Table 13: Classification matrix for long-term microbial environmental quality indicators and objectives for primary and secondary contact recreation	<p>Reword as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replace the moderate/high/very high advice in column 'E' with 'Follow-up' and remove 'Not suitable for any contact recreation' • Replace 131 with 130 in the 'Freshwater' column B reference.
Schedule 3: Environmental Quality Indicators and Objectives Table 14: Short term indicators and objectives for water based recreation	<p>DHHS is supportive of aligning with the NHMRC Guidelines for managing risks in recreational water. The NHMRC guidance is currently under review and indicators and objectives are likely to change. How will DELWP incorporate updates to ensure the values in the SEPP remain current?</p>
General comment	<p>Site specific health and ecological risk assessments should be conducted for water bodies where human consumption of aquatic foods is listed as a beneficial end use.</p> <p>It is not clear how the SEPP is applied in relation to growing and harvesting of shellfish (mollusc and abalone) for aquaculture as a beneficial use.</p>