Recreational Water Quality  
Annual Report

Reporting period 1 July 2019 – 30 June 2020

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Recreational Water Quality Report 2019-2020

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# 1. INTRODUCTION

Recreational activities involving contact with bodies of water are very popular in Tasmania, particularly during summer.

While Tasmania has an extensive coastline and many inland water bodies, many recreational areas are relatively inaccessible.

The most widely used recreational waters are the more accessible coastal beaches, freshwater rivers and lakes, especially those close to urban areas with good road access.

Publically accessible swimming pools and spa pools are also popular.

The *Recreational Water Quality Guidelines 2007* (the Guidelines) issued under the *Public Health Act 1997*, require councils to regularly monitor water quality at recognised recreational sites and to respond to identified risks to public health. These sites are defined as sites that are used regularly by a relatively large number of people, and include all public swimming pools and public spa pools.

Councils must provide an annual report to the Department of Health (DoH) on their activities relating to recreational water quality monitoring.

Information provided in council annual reports is summarised in the *Recreational Water Quality* *Annual Report*.

This report provides information to the community on water quality at recognised recreational sites in Tasmania.

For further information about water quality at particular sites, contact the relevant council Environmental Health Officer (EHO), whose contact details are provided in this report.

# 2. BACKGROUND

## 2.1 Health Risks from Swimming

Many natural bodies of water are at risk of contamination. Water contaminated by sewage and animal waste often contains a range of pathogenic micro-organisms such as viruses, bacteria and protozoa.

These organisms pose a risk to human health when the water is used for recreational activities like swimming and other water contact activities. This is because during these activities there is a risk that water could be swallowed, or inhaled.

Contaminated water may also come into contact with ears, nasal passages, mucous membranes and cuts in the skin, allowing disease-causing organisms to enter the body.

In most cases, any health effects from exposure to contaminated water are relatively minor and short-lived, such as skin rashes and ear, eye and gastrointestinal infections.

However there is potential for more serious illness, including invasive or complicated gastrointestinal infections, particularly among vulnerable persons (NHMRC 2008).

Public swimming and spa pools are at lower risk from significant contamination with animal-derived pathogens. Routine management of water quality in pools and spas will reduce the risk posed by human-derived contamination (such as *Cryptosporidium*, and enteric viruses) and environmental contaminants (such as *Legionella*), but regular monitoring is still required.

## 2.2 Roles and Responsibilities of Agencies

Local Tasmanian Councils, the Department of Primary Industries, Parks, Water and Environment and the Department of Health all have responsibilities for managing recreational water and protecting human health where the public use such waters.

It is not practical for all potential recreational waters in a jurisdiction to be regularly monitored.

It is therefore necessary and appropriate to focus on particular areas, such as beaches, lakes or rivers that are used regularly, by a large number of people, for primary contact purposes. Primary contact refers to an activity in which the whole body or face and trunk are immersed or the face is frequently wet by spray. These areas must be monitored in line with these guidelines.

Public events involving primary contact activities have also become more popular in recent years, including school triathlons and other community based swimming events. Where these sites are not already monitored, the controlling authority should consider doing so.

The Derwent Estuary Program (DEP) and the Tamar and Estuary and Esk Rivers Program (TEER Program) work collaboratively with councils and other stakeholders to identify sources of contamination and implement strategies to improve water quality. They also facilitate community messaging consistent with these guidelines, advising of water quality at primary contact sites.

If there is any doubt about the need for monitoring, the advice of the Director of Public Health should be sought.

In accordance with Section 128 of the *Public Health Act 1997*:

*An agency, public authority or person managing or in control of water must:*

1. *manage the water in a manner that does not pose a threat to public health; and*
2. *on becoming aware that the quality of the water is, or is likely to become, a threat to public health, notify the Director in accordance with any relevant Guidelines.*

Monitoring should be undertaken in line with the following procedures:

1. Take samples of natural recreational water bodies at the beginning of the swimming season and thereafter weekly during the season. This includes December, January, February and March, unless other arrangements are approved by the Director of Public Health.
2. Take samples from all public swimming pools and public spa pools on a monthly basis or, if directed in writing by an Authorised Officer, more frequently.
3. Conduct additional sampling whenever a threat to public health is suspected.
4. Each Controlling Authority - the agency, public authority or person managing or in control of water, shall consult the Director on the proposed sampling program to be used when a threat to public health is suspected.
5. At the end of each swimming season the Controlling Authority is required to prepare a report on recreational water quality management for presentation to the Director by 30 September each year.

These reporting requirements are detailed in Appendix A of the Guidelines.

They include the name and location of the natural recreational water body, date and type of sampling conducted, results of sampling and interpretation of results in terms of health risks associated with the use of that water.

Details of public swimming pools and public spa pools are also required, including their name and location, date and type of sampling, details of any pool and spa closures and subsequent corrective actions.

# 3. AUSTRALIAN GUIDELINES FOR RECREATIONAL USE OF WATER

The National Health and Medical Research Council (NH&MRC) have produced *Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water,* 2008.

These guidelines were developed to provide information to the public and government agencies on the suitability of natural waters for recreational use.

While they do not apply to public swimming pool and spa water quality, the national guidelines are currently under review and these sites may be included in future revisions.

The national guidelines are not mandatory, but provide a benchmark for water quality to enable the safe use of natural recreational waters.

The classification of recreational water environments into water quality categories in the national guidelines is based on combining the results of sanitary inspection and water quality assessment.

The Tasmanian *Recreational Water Quality Guidelines 2007* have combined water quality categories A and B (detailed in the national guidelines) into a single Good Water Quality indicator, category C into a Moderate Water Quality indicator and category D into a Poor Water Quality indicator.

The *Recreational Water Quality Guidelines 2007* are also currently under review.

# 4. COUNCIL RECREATIONAL WATER quality MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Table 1 – Council Recreational Water Quality Management Activities

| **Council** | **Site / Water Body** | **Location** | **Type of Sampling** | **Sampling Frequency** | **Results** | **Comments / Corrective Action** |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **4.1 Break O'Day Council**  **Contact**  **Break O’Day Council:  6376 7900** | Natural recreational water body  sampling sites | 1. Beauty Bay, St Helens 2. Grants Lagoon, Binalong Bay 3. Henderson Lagoon, Falmouth 4. Scamander River Mouth, Scamander 5. Wrinklers Lagoon, Scamander 6. Yarmouth Creek, Beaumaris | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Limited sampling undertaken.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly until 31 March 2025. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values. | Infrequent sampling was attributed to a lack of staff availablilty. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Bayside Inn, St Helens, pool 2. Blue Seas Holiday Villas, pool, Scamander 3. Scamander Beach Hotel Motel, pool 4. St Helens District High School, pool 5. St Marys District High School, pool 6. Tidal Waters, St Helens, pool 7. White Sands Estate, Ironhouse Point, 1 pool, 1 spa | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Limited sampling undertaken.  Council is required to sample all public pools and public spas monthly when open. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values.  Sampling was not undertaken for Site 6. | Infrequent sampling was attributed to a lack of staff availablilty. |
| **4.2 Brighton Council Contact:  Brent Bastian  6268 7029** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Jetty Road, Old Beach | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | The site was compliant with Guideline values, with the exception of one occasion in December. Non-compliances have been attributed to an unusually high levels of bird life at the site.  The site is recognised as used for secondary contact activities. | Permanent signs are in place advising against primary contact activities. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Brighton Swim centre | Bacteriological Heterotrophic Plate Count Thermotolerant coliforms/ *E.coli Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Monthly. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.3 Burnie Council Contact: Sandy Loring**  **6430 5789** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Cooee Beach, east end 2. Cooee Beach, west end 3. West Beach, east end 4. West Beach, west end 5. South Burnie, yacht club | Bacteriological Enterococci | Fortnightly from December to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to fortnightly until 31 March 2025. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | Sites were suitable for primary contact. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Burnie Aquatic Centre, Burnie, 2 pools 2. Healthglo Fitness & Leisure, Burnie, pool 3. North-west Regional Hospital, hydrotherapy pool 4. Private Pool Hire, Camdale, pool 5. TLC Aquatic, West Mooreville Road, Burnie, pool 6. Taswim, Burnie, pool 7. School of Special Education, Burnie | Bacteriological Heterotrophic Plate Count Thermotolerant coliforms/ *E.coli Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Monthly. | Results were compliant with Guideline values, with the exception of two occasions. | Corrective actions were taken in response to non-compliant results. Re-sampling returned compliant results with no pool closures required.. |
| **4.4 Central Coast Council**  **Contact: Bill Hyndes**  **6429 8936** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Bannons Park, Gunns Plains, Level River 2. Johnsons Beach, Penguin Caravan Park 3. Midway Point, Penguin 4. Penguin Main Beach, Penguin 5. Penguin Surf Life Saving Club, Penguin 6. Picnic Point Beach, West Ulverstone 7. Turners Beach 8. Ulverstone Surf Life Saving Club, Ulverstone | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly from mid January to March. | Ocean beach sites, Sites 2 – 8 were compliant with Guideline values.  Freshwater samples from Sites 1 were non-compliant on five occasions. | Water quality was generally compliant at most sites, with non-compliant results at Site 1.  The higher levels of enterococci at Site 1 may have been influenced by runoff from the more densely populated Ulverstone area.  Delay in commencement of sampling was attributed to lack of staff availability. |
|  | Pools and Spas | 1. East Ulverstone Indoor Pool, pool 2. Mount Saint Vincent, Ulverstone, hydrotherapy pool 3. Ulverstone Water Slide, Ulverstone, pool | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Limited sampling undertaken.  Council is required to sample all public pools and public spas monthly when open. | Results were compliant with Guideline values.  Site 3 was sampled monthly, Site 4 sampled twice and Sites 1 and 2 were sampled once. | No corredctive actions were required.  Infrequent sampling was attributed to a lack of staff availablilty. Council has indicated an improved sampling regime will be implemented for 2019-2020. |
| **4.5 Central Highlands Council**  **Contact: Bev Armstrong**  **6259 5503** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Bradys Lake 2. Broad River, Ouse 3. Bronte Lagoon 4. Derwent River, Lake Meadowbank 5. Wayatinah Lagoon | Bacteriological Enterococci | Sampling was conducted at all sites on one occasion. | Results of sampling were not reported.  Council has commented that all sites were compliant with Guideline values. | Permanent ‘no swimming’ signs are in place at a number of sites where, in previous years, sampling has indicated poor water quality. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Bothwell Swimming Pool, Bothwell | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Monthly when open. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.6 Circular Head Council**  **Contact: Emily Neal**  **6452 4842** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Crayfish Creek 2. Detention River 3. Godfreys Beach 4. Tatlows Beach | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly. | Sites 1 and 3 were compliant with Guideline values.  Guideline values were exceeded on one occasion at Site 2 and  on two occasions at Site 4. | Permanent signs remain in place at Sites 1 and 2 advising against primary contact activities at these sites. This is based on a history of non-compliant results for these sites in previous years.  The higher levels of enterococci at Site a could be attributed to samples taken at low tide where there was significant amount of seaweed present. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Circular Head Indoor Recreation and Leisure (SWIRL), Smithton, 3 pools 2. Tall Timbers, Smithton, 1 pool | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. | Monthly | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.7 Clarence City Council**  **Contact: Scott Edwards**  **6217 9573** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Bellerive Beach East 2. Bellerive Beach West 3. Howrah Beach East 4. Howrah Beach Middle, Salacia Ave 5. Howrah Beach West, Silwood Ave 6. Little Howrah Beach 7. Lauderdale Beach | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly from December to March and monthly during other months for Sites 1- 5. Site 6 was sampled on one occasion. | Water quality at Sites 2, 3 5 and 6 have been graded as Good while Site 4 was graded as Fair.  Geilston Bay, Lindisfarne Bay, Montagu Bay and Kangaroo Bay are considered environmental sites and are also monitored routinely by the DEP.  Results above Guideline values at Sites 2 and 4 in late-December have been attributed to stormwater discharge into the Derwent Estuary following rainfall.  Results above Guideline values at Site 6 on one occasion occurred without rainfall recorded in the preceeding 72 hours and indicate the likelihood of other sources of Enterococci.  Results above the Guideline values at Site 7 on four occasions have been attributed to bird faecal matter following testing of sterol markers. | All recreational water sites were considered suitable for primary contact.  Council continues to fund investigative works throughout the stormwater network and work collaboratively with TasWater and the DEP to identify and upgrade problematic areas such as these sites.  Sampling at Site 7 commenced to establish the suitability of the site for primary contact activities as part of a new Council Park Development. |
|  | Pools and Spas | 1. Barilla Thermal Springs, Cambridge, 1 spa 2. Clarence Aquatic Centre, Montagu Bay, 3 pools 3. Clarence Joint Therapy, Howrah, 1 pool, 4. Oceana Health and Fitness, Mornington, 1 hydro therapy pool, 1 pool 5. RAMADA, Seven Mile Beach, 1 pool, 1 spa 6. Richmond Caravan Park, Richmond, 1 pool 7. Sea Horse Swim Centre, Howrah, 1 pool 8. Shellz Swim Centre, Rokeby East, 1 pool 9. Steve’s Swim School, Acton park, 1 pool, 1 spa 10. SwimKamp, Lauderdale, 1 pool | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*. | Monthly when open. | Results were compliant with Guideline values.  . | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.8 Derwent Valley Council**  **Contact: Derwent Valley Council:**  **6261 8525** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | No sites were sampled. | No sampling conducted. | No sampling conducted. | No sampling conducted. | Council has indicated an improved sampling regime will be implemented for 2020-2021. |
| Pools and Spas | No sites were sampled. | No sampling conducted. | No sampling conducted. | No sampling conducted. | Council has indicated an improved sampling regime will be implemented for 2020-2021. |
| **4.9 Devonport City Council**  **Contact: Madeline McKinnell**  **6424 0545** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Back Beach 2. Bluff Beach 3. Coles Beach 4. East Devonport Beach | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Weekly from December to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to fortnightly until 31 March 2025. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | Sites were suitable for primary contact. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Barclay Motor Inn, Fenton St, pool 2. Croft, Croft Ave, Devonport, pool 3. Gordon Place, Devonport, pool 4. Lawrence Drive, Devonport, pool 5. Nixon St Primary School, Devonport, pool 6. Splash Aquatic Centre, Devonport , 2 hydrotherapy pools, 2 pools | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Monthly from December to March. | Six samples exceeded Guideline values throughout the season. | Where results exceeded Guideline values corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken.  Sites 1 was closed once following two consecutive non-compliant sample results and reopened upon receipt of two compliant results. |
| **4.10 Dorset Council**  **Contact: Robert Masterman**  **6353 6575** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Old Pier Beach | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Results were compliant with Guideline values, with the exception of a single non-compliant result in mid-February. Re-sampling returned compliant results. | Site was considered suitable for primary contact activities with the single non-compliant result attributed to stormwater impacts. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Branxholm Pool, Branxholm 2. Lost Farm Wellness Centre Spa, Bridport, spa 3. Ringarooma Pool, Ringarooma 4. Scottsdale Pool, Scottsdale 5. Winnaleah Pool, Winnaleah | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Monthly when open. The exception to this was Site 3 where sampling was not conducted in some months. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.11 Flinders Island Council**  **Contact: Jacci Viney**  **6359 5005** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Allports Beach 2. Killicrankie Bay 3. Lady Barron 4. Whitemark | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Monthly from December to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly until 31 March 2025. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | Sites were suitable for primary contact. |
| Pools and spas | No operating public swimming pools or spa pools were reported. |  |  |  |  |
| **4.12 George Town Council**  **Contact: Patricia Stanwell**  **6382 8845** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Lagoon Beach 2. Pilot Station 3. Pipe Clay Bay 4. Weymouth 5. York Cove | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Monthly from December to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly until 31 March 2025. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | Sites were suitable for primary contact. |
| Pools and spas | 1. George Town Swimming Pool | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Monthly from December to March**.** | Results were compliant with Guideline values, with the exception of a single non-compliant result in late-March. | George Town Swimming Pool was not operating and closed to the public when sampling was undertaken in March. Corrective actions will be undertaken prior to 2020-2021 swimming season. |
| **4.13 Glamorgan/Spring Bay Council**  **Contact: Glamorgan Spring Bay Council:**  **6256 4777** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. East Shelly Beach, Orford 2. Jubilee Beach, Swansea 3. Muirs Beach 4. Raspins Beach, Orford 5. Richardson’s Beach, Coles Bay 6. Spring Beach, Orford 7. Waubs Beach, Bicheno | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Weekly from December to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly until 31 March 2025. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | Sites were suitable for primary contact. |
| Pools and spas | 1. Beachfront at Bicheno, pool 2. Bicheno By the Bay, pool 3. Eastcoaster Resort, 2 pools, 1 spa 4. Piermont Retreat, 1 pool 5. Saffire Freycinet, 4 pools 6. Swansea Beach Chalets, 1 pool, Shaw Street 7. Wintersun Gardens Motel, pool | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | No sampling conducted.  Council is required to sample all public pools and public spas monthly when open. | Seven samples exceeded Guideline values throughout the season. | Corrective action was taken and re-sampling returned compliant results.  Site 4 did not reopen following non-compliant result. |
| **4.14 Glenorchy City Council**  **Contact: Simone Salter**  **6216 6790** | Natural recreational water body sampling site | 1. Windermere Beach | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly from December to March**.** | Results were compliant with Guideline values at Windermere Beach.  As in previous years environmental sites at  Elwick Bay, Mona BerriedaleBay , Mona Cameron Bay and Mona Jetty were also monitored. Guideline values were exceeded on one occasion at Mona Cameron Bay. | Windermere beach was suitable for primary contact. |
| Pools and spas | 1. Glenorchy Swim Stars, pool 2. KGV Hydrotherapy Pool, pool 3. Mona Pool, Berriedale 4. One Care, Glenorchy, pool 5. Riverfront Motel & Villas, pool 6. Undine Pool, Rosetta 7. Waterfront Lodge, Lutana, pool 8. YMCA, 50 m pool 9. YMCA, wading pool 10. YMCA, Slide Pool | Bacteriological  Heterotrophic Plate Count  Thermotolerant coliforms/  *E.coli*  *Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Monthly from December to March. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values with the exception of one sample at Sites 5 and 6. | Where Guideline values were exceeded corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken.  No pools or spas were closed. |
| **4.15 Hobart (City of Hobart)**  **Contact: Felicity Edwards**  **6238 2842** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Nutgrove Beach East 2. Nutgrove Beach Middle 3. Nutgrove Beach West 4. Little Sandy Bay Beach North 5. Little Sandy Bay beach South | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values  Although not recognised swimming sites, Marieville Esplanade and Cornelian Bay are included in the monitoring program as environmental sites. | No corrective actions were required.  Signage is in place at Marieville Esplanade and Cornelian Bay, warning of poor water quality. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Bay View Villas, Poets Road, 1 pool 2. Doone Kennedy Hobart Aquatic Centre, Davies Avenue, 3 pools, 1 spa 3. Friends Health & Fitness, Elizabeth St, 1 pool, 1 spa 4. Hotel Grand Chancellor, Hobart, 1 pool 5. Ibis Styles Hobart, 1 pool 6. Jodi Harrison Swim Centre, New Town Road, 2 pools, 1 spa 7. Rydges Hotel, Argyle St, 1 pool 8. Salamanca Inn, Gladstone St, 1 pool, 1 spa 9. Savoy Baths, Elizabeth St, 1 pool, 2 spas 10. Star Fish Swim Centre, Stratton Ave, 1 pool 11. St Michaels Collegiate, Macquarie St, 1 pool 12. Wrest point, Sandy Bay Road, 1 pool, 1 spa | Bacteriological Heterotrophic Plate Count Thermotolerant coliforms/ *E.coli Pseudomonas aeruginosa* | Monthly | A small number of samples were non-compliant across five sites throughout the sampling period. | Where results were non-compliant council officers ensured corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken to ensure compliance with Guideline values. All resamples complied with Guideline values with no pool closures required. |
| **4.16 Huon Valley Council**  **Contact: Amigo Huber**  **6264 0354** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | No sites were sampled. | No sampling conducted. | No sampling conducted. | No sampling conducted. | Sampling was not undertaken as approval to cease sampling was obtained in 2012 from the Director of Public Health. Council continues to respond to complaints, issues or concerns the public may have regarding water quality.  Permanent swimming advisory signs are in place at Dover Beach, Randalls Bay and Verona Sands advising the public of potential contamination, due to outfalls from nearby natural lagoons and stormwater, following rainfall events.  Council indicated sampling regime will resume for 2020-2021 swimming season. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Hastings Caves Pool 2. Huonville Swimming Pool 3. Port Huon Swimming Pool | Bacteriological  (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values, with the exception of one occasion at Site 1 and two consecutive occasions at Site 3. | Where results were non-compliant council officers ensured corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken to ensure compliance with Guideline values. Site 3 was closed once following two consecutive non-compliant sample results and reopened upon receipt of two compliant results. |
| **4.17 Kentish Council**  **Contact: Adam Gardner**  **6491 0200** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Lake Barrington - Kentish Park 2. Lake Barrington - Rowing Course 3. Lake Barrington – Wilmot Picnic Area | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Monthly from November to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly until 31 March 2025. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions required. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Cradle Mountain Hotel, Cradle Mountain,1spa 2. Sheffield School Railton Campus, 1 pool 3. Silver Ridge Retreat, 1 pool 4. Peppers Lodge, Cradle Mountain – 2 spas | Bacteriological  (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli,* *Pseudomonas aeruginosa*). | Monthly when open. | A small number of samples were non-compliant across three sites throughout the sampling period. | Where non-compliant results occurred, corrective actions were undertaken. |
| **4.18 Kingborough Council**  **Contact: Abyilene McGuire**  **6211 8240** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Blackmans Bay Beach North 2. Blackmans Bay Beach Middle 3. Blackmans Bay Beach South 4. Kingston Beach (North) 5. Kingston Beach (Middle) 6. Kingston Beach (South) 7. Browns River 8. Taroona Beach 9. Hinsby Beach 10. Howden – Wingara Road 11. Snug Beach 12. Margate – Dru Point 13. Woodbridge-Silverwater Park 14. Conningham Beach 15. Tinderbox Beach 16. Middleton Beach 17. Nebraska Beach 18. Alonnah Beach 19. Quiet Corner 20. Adventure Bay Beach 21. Simmonds Beach | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly from December to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly at the Channel Sites (7) and bi-monthly at Bruny Island (5) until 1 December 2024. | Sites were generally compliant with Guideline values.  All sites south of the Derwent Estuary and on Bruny Island were compliant with Guideline values.  Although not currently recognised as swimming sites, Sites 3 and 7 are included in the monitoring program as environmental sites. | Where non-compliant results occurred, corrective actions were undertaken.  Permanent signs indicating a water quality grading of good, moderate or poor are in place at: Site 4 (fair), Site 4 (good), Site 6 (fair) and Site 8 (good).  Permanent signage is also in place at Site 3 and Site 7 warning of poor water quality. In general, the 2019-2020 sampling results indicate significantly better water quality in the Derwent Estuary sites compared to 2018-2019 sampling season.  Council continues to fund investigative works throughout the stormwater network and work collaboratively with TasWater and the DEP to identify and upgrade problematic areas. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Beach Orchard Health & Recreation Centre, Margate, 1 pool,1 spa 2. Channel Swim School, 1 pool 3. Kingston Pool, Kingston, pool 4. Villa Howden, 1 pool 5. Woodbridge Pool, Woodbridge Hill Road, pool | Bacteriological  (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly. | Sites were generally compliant with Guideline values with the exception of one site. | In response to non-compliant results Council ensured corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken. Re-sampling returned compliant results with no pool closures required. |
| **4.19 King Island Council**  **Contact: Robyn Barwick**  **6462 9000** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Currie Harbour Little Beach 2. Grassy Harbour Boat Ramp 3. Fraser Beach South | Bacteriological Enterococci | Limited sampling.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly until 31 March 2025. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Grassy Pool | Bacteriological  (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Limited sampling.  Council is required to sample all public pools and public spas monthly when open. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.20 Latrobe Council**  **Contact: Glenys Nichols**  **6426 4444** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Camp Banksia Dam 2. Freer Beach - Shearwater 3. Hawley Beach 4. Mersey River - end of Shale Road 5. Mersey River - Bells Parade 6. Panatana Rivulet 7. Port Sorell Pontoon 8. Squeaking Point | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Results were non-compliant with Guideline values at Site 4 on eight occasions and on one occasion at end of Site 3.  Sites 5 and 7 were noncompliant with Guideline values on a single occasion in late March. | Public health advisories were issued for Site 4 on three occasions with signage put in place advising of poor water quality. Additional sampling was undertaken in the vicinity of this site as part of a sanitary survey to investigate possible sources of contamination. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Latrobe Swimming Pool, Latrobe, 1 pool 2. Lotus Waters Wellness Centre Spa, Shearwater, 1 spa 3. Rubicon River Hideaway, Squeaking Point, 1 spa 4. Rubicon Swim School, Latrobe, 1 pool 5. Shearwater Resort, Shearwater, 2 pools, 1 spa 6. Strathdevon Aged Care, Latrobe, 1 hydrotherapy pool, 7. Tudor Cabins, Northdown, 1 pool | Bacteriological (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly. | Non-compliant results occurred on three occasions at Site 4 spa and on one occasion at Site 3. | Where non-compliant results occurred, Council ensured corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken. Re-sampling returned compliant results with no closures required. |
| **4.21 Launceston (City of Launceston)**  **Contact: Clare Harding**  **6323 3204** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Corra Linn 2. First Basin, South Esk River Catchment 3. St Leonards Picnic Ground, North Esk River Catchment 4. Waverley Lake | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Results were generally compliant with Guideline values with the exception of one occasion at Site 1 and two occasions at Site 3 and Site 4. Re-sampling at this site returned compliant results on both occasions. | Signage was placed when elevated levels were recorded. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Australian Maritime College, Newnham Pool, pool 2. Brent Wrankmore Swim School, Launceston, pool 3. Glen Dhu Pool, South Launceston, pool 4. Glenara Lakes Pool and Spa, Youngtown, 1 pool, 1 spa 5. Just Swim, Kings Meadows, pool 6. Launceston Aquatic Centre, Launceston, 6 pools, 1 spa 7. Launceston Church Grammar, East Launceston, pool 8. Launceston College Pool and Spa, Launceston, 1 pool, 1 spa 9. Launceston Swim School, South Launceston, pool 10. Lilydale Pool, Lilydale, 2 pools 11. Liquid Zen Float Rooms, Launceston, 2 pools 12. Olde Tudor pool and Spa, Launceston, 1 pool and 1 spa 13. Sacred Heart Pool, Launceston, pool 14. St Patricks College Pool, Launceston 15. Theogenes, Launceston, 2 Spas 16. Village family Motor Inn, South Launceston, 1 pool, 1 spa | Bacteriological  (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa) | Monthly. | Results were generally compliant with Guideline values with the exception of one sample at Site 6 and two samples at Site 10.  . | Where non-compliant results occurred, Council ensured corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken. Re-sampling returned compliant results with no closures required. |
| **4.22 Meander Valley Council**  **Contact: Katie Proctor 6393 5339** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Blackstone Heights - Lake Trevallyn 2. Bracknell Picnic Area - Liffey River 3. Egmont Bridge - Meander River 4. Hadspen Picnic Area - South Esk River | Bacteriological Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Results were compliant with Guideline values for primary contact at Site 4.  Results were non-compliant for most of the swimming season at Site 2, on four occasions at Site 1 and on one occasion Site 3. | Water quality at Site 1 and Site 3 were suitable for primary contact, with results of re-sampling following non-compliances returning compliant results.  While results exceeded Guideline values throughout the season at Site 2, public health advisories were not required as subsequent re-sampling on each occasion did not exceed values.  Water quality at Site 4 was suitable for primary contact. |
| Pools and spas | 1. Caveside Pool, pool 2. Country Club Casino, Prospect vale, 1 pool, 1 spa 3. Country Club Villas, 1 pool, 1 spa 4. Deloraine Pool, pool 5. Deloraine Primary School, pool 6. Mole Creek Pool, pool | Bacteriological  (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly when open. | Noncompliant results occurred on one occasion at one pool site, on four occasions at one spa site and on three occasions at another spa site. | Where results were non-compliant, Council ensured corrective actions and re-sampling was undertaken. Re-sampling returned compliant results in all but one occasion, which resulted in closures of Site 2 spa and Site 5 until further action and re-sampling indicated compliance. |
| **4.23 Northern Midlands Council**  **Contact: Chris Wicks**  **6397 7335** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Mill Dam Reserve, Longford, South Esk River 2. Rotary Park, Leighlands Road, Evandale, South Esk River 3. William Street Reserve, Perth, South Esk River | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Sites were generally compliant with Guideline values with the exception of one occasion at Site 1. | Re-sampling of the one non-compliant result could not be undertaken due to unavailability of staff. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Campbell Town Pool, Campbell Town, pool 2. Cressy Pool, Cressy, pool 3. Ross Pool, Ross, pool | Bacteriological (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly when open. | All sites were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.24 Sorell Council**  **Contact: Greg Robertson**  **6269 0041** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Connelly’s Beach 2. McKinly St, Midway Point 3. Park Beach 4. Primrose Beach 5. Red Ochre Beach North 6. Red Ochre Beach South 7. Tigerhead Beach, Seventh Ave | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Sites were compliant with Guideline values for primary contact activities, with the exception of Site 2 on one occasion. | Water quality at all sites was considered suitable for primary contact and given a grading of good, with the exception of Site 6.  Classification of water quality at Sites 1 and 2 is only based on four years of monitoring data.  Council conducts annual sanitary surveys of all sites to help determine changes in influences/causative effects on water quality. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Flippers Swim Centre, pool 2. Steeles Island Retreat, Carlton Beach, 1 spa | Bacteriological (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly when open. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.25 Southern Midlands Council**  **Contact: Leon McGuiness**  **6259 3011** | Natural recreational water body  sampling sites |  |  |  |  | No primary contact sites have been identified in municipal area. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Oatlands Swimming Pool, Oatlands, pool | Bacteriological (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly when open. | Results were compliant with Guideline values with the exception of a single occasion. | Corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken. Re-sampling returned compliant results with no closures required. |
| **4.26 Tasman Council**  **Contact: Natalie Rogers**   1. **0** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Carnavon Bay, Brick Point 2. Carnavon Bay, McCormicks Drive 3. Sloping Main 4. Stewarts Bay 5. White Beach | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Monthly from December to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly until 31 March 2025. | Results were compliant with Guideline values, with the exception of Site 2 on one occasion. | All sites were suitable for primary contact.  Permanent signs advising of poor water quality have been erected at Sucklings Creek/Parsons Bay and Stewarts Bay, based on noncompliant results in previous years. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Tasman District Pool, Tasman District School, pool | Bacteriological (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly when open. | Results were compliant with Guideline values. | No corrective actions were required. |
| **4.27 Waratah-Wynyard Council**  **Contact: David Kleyweg**  **6443 8342** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Boat Harbour Beach 2. Cam River Somerset 3. East Wynyard Beach 4. Sisters Beach 5. Sisters Beach Creek 6. Somerset Beach | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Sampling was conducted weekly at Sisters Creek and Cam River and monthly at the remaining sites, from December to March.  Council has been provided approval by the Director of Public Health to vary sampling frequency to monthly at Sites 1, 3, 4 and 6 until 31 March 2025. | Sampling sites were compliant with Guideline values, with the exception of Sisters Beach Creek. Non-compliant results occurred on all but four occasions throughout the season at Sisters Beach Creek. | Permanent signs are in place at Sisters Creek advising that water is unsuitable for primary contact. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Leisure Ville Caravan Park, East Wynyard, 1 pool, 1 spa 2. Wescombe’s Leisure and Therapy Centre, Somerset, 1 pool, 1 spa 3. Wynyard Fitness, Wynyard, 1 pool, 1 spa | No details provided. | No details provided. | No details provided. | Minimal detail provided by council. |
| **4.28 West Coast Council**  **Contact: West Coast Council**  **6471 4700** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. West Strahan Beach | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Results complied with the Guideline values for primary contact activities with the exception of two occasions.  Re-sampling on all occasions returned compliant results. | A public health advisory was issued for Site 1 in response to non-compliant results in February and March. Storm events, growth of filamentous algae and stormwater outfalls onto the beach were noted as possible sources of contamination. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Queenstown Swimming Pool, 3 pools 2. Rosebery Swimming pool, 1 pool 3. Zeehan Swimming Pool, 3 pools | Bacteriological (Heterotrophic Plate Count, Thermotolerant coliforms/*E.coli, Pseudomonas aeruginosa*) | Monthly when open. | Sites were complaint with Guideline values with the exception of Site 2. | Corrective actions and re-sampling were undertaken. Site 2 remain closed until receipt of two compliant results. |
| **4.29 West Tamar Council**  **Contact: Rick Chippindall**   1. **6** | Natural recreational water body sampling sites | 1. Beauty Point 2. Deviot 3. Gravelly Beach 4. Greens Beach 5. Kelso 6. Paper Beach 7. Redbill Point 8. Rosevears 9. Lake Trevallyn | Bacteriological  Enterococci | Weekly from December to March. | Sites were complaint with Guideline values with the exception of a single non-compliant result at Site 6.  Re-sampling at this site returned compliant results.  Although significant algal blooms have occurred at Site 5 in previous years, microbial results for this season were generally acceptable. | Water quality at all sites was suitable for primary contact.  Council conducts and records details of weather conditions and recreational activities at each site at the time of sampling which contributes to the broader understanding of the sites and catchment. |
| Pools and Spas | 1. Beaconsfield Primary School Pool, Beaconsfield 2. Big4 Kelso Sands Holiday Park, Kelso 3. Gravelly Beach Swim Centre, Gravelly Beach 4. Paddles 2 Swim, Legana 5. Riverside Swim Centre, Riverside 6. Tamar Cove Motel, Beauty Point 7. Tamar Valley Resort, Grindelwald |  |  | No pool or spa results were reported to council. | No non-compliant results were reported to council. |

# 5. DISCUSSION

This is the nineteenth year of reporting on recreational water quality management in Tasmania.

Twenty-five of 29 councils reported having active water quality monitoring programs for natural recreational water bodies within their municipal areas. Two of the four councils that did not do regular testing reported that they manage natural recreational waters through public health advisories (signage).

When routine testing identified non-compliant water quality in natural recreational water bodies, councils responded with a combination of re-sampling and advisory signage, to indicate that the water was temporarily unsuitable for swimming. Management of recreational water siteswhere ongoing non-compliance was identified has included installing permanent signage, conducting sanitary surveys including further investigation of stormwater systems and other possible sources of contaminants within the immediate catchments areas.

By undertaking regular testing of designated natural recreational water sites, and managing them in accordance with Guidelines, councils help the public to make confident and informed decisions about water quality and the risk to human health when swimming or enjoying other recreational water activities.

The Guidelines also require councils to undertake ongoing risk assessments of natural recreational water bodies, through their sanitary surveys, to ensure that all new or emerging threats to the water body are evaluated.

Most councils reported having monthly water quality monitoring programs in place for public swimming pools and public spa pools. Non-compliant results were addressed by requiring operators to undertake corrective actions. Corrective actions include re-sampling to verify the effectiveness of the actions taken and can also include pool/spa closures.

The Guidelines describe councils’ responsibilities in relation to managing natural recreational water bodies. Sampling frequency is prescribed, but the Guidelines also provide for a council to seek the Director of Public Health’s approval for a variation in sampling frequency. A council must demonstrate that historical water quality data clearly indicates consistent compliance with Guideline values and/or through sanitary survey analysis that a site is not subject to any readily identifiable point or diffuse pollution sources. This process should accommodate both a risk assessment that is sensitive to the hazards that may emerge at a site, and an approach that considers the public use of the site and the appropriate deployment of council resources.

The current review of the *Tasmanian Recreational Water Quality Guidelines* and ongoing annual council reporting on recreational water quality management has identified non-compliances with the required monitoring frequency. Sampling frequency of both natural recreational water bodies and public pools/spas has been insufficient across a number of councils.

DoH officers have recently completeda statewide review of all councilrecreational water quality management activities, with ongoing review to occur on a 5 yearly basis. This was initiated in October 2019 when the Director of Public Health, Dr Mark Veitch wrote to all council general managers, advising of this project. Councils were reminded of the process for seeking approval to vary to sampling frequency of natural recreational water sites and that they must ensure water quality at public pools and public spas is monitored and managed in accordance with the guidelines, noting the importance of complying with the set sampling frequency at these sites.

Site visits/discussions with councils were conducted between November 2019 and March 2020 and the outcomes of the review were provided to councils in October 2020. DoH intends to commence a statewide audit of all recreational water site Public Health Advisory signage, with a view to both progressing towards standardised, consistent advisories, and developing site specific LISTmap signage location coordinates. Officers will continue to work closely with councils to ensure improved recreational water quality surveillance by councils.

In conclusion, it is important that the public remains aware that heavy rainfall events affect the water quality of recreational areas, especially near storm water outfalls, as contaminants on the land are washed into the water. Accordingly, people should not swim near flowing storm water outfalls, and should wait for at least two days after rain before swimming in areas where contaminated run-off is likely to have occurred. This general advice applies to designated natural recreational water sites and other locations in Tasmania.



**Paul Hunt**

**State Manager Environmental Health Services**

# 6. DEFINITIONS

**“Agency”** means an Agency within the meaning of the *Tasmanian State Service Act 2000*.

**“Authorised Officer”**means –

a) The Director; or

b) A medical officer of health; or

c) An environmental health officer.

**“Controlling Authority”** means an Agency, public authority or person managing or in control of water.

**“Council”** means a council with the meaning of the *Local Government Act 1993*.

**“Director of Public Health”** means the Director of Public Health appointed under section 6 of the *Public Health Act 1997*.

**“Environmental Health Officer”** means a person appointed under section 10 or 11 of the *Public Health Act 1997*.

***“E.coli (Escherichia coli)”*** refers to a group of bacteria found in the gut of warm blooded animals (including humans), used as an indicator of faecal contamination of water.

***“*Enterococci*”*** is a group of bacteria common to the faecal matter of warm-blooded animals, including humans. It is commonly used as an indicator of faecal contamination of estuarine and marine water bodies.

**“Heterotrophic Plate Count (or Standard Plate Count)”** is a measure of the overall bacteriological quality of water, used in conjunction with other bacterial indicator species.

**“Natural recreational water body”** includes any coastal and estuarine water (including tidal washed pools and marine baths that interchange with seawater), natural fresh water environs such as rivers or streams, lakes, weirs and dams but not public pools and spas.

**“Public spa pool”** means a pool or other water-retaining structure for human use that incorporates, or is connected to equipment that is capable of heating any water contained in it and injecting air bubbles or water into it under pressure so as to cause general disturbance in the water, to which the general public has access (whether for payment or fee or not), or which is for the general use of guests in tourist accommodation, other than:

a) a spa pool; or

b) a tidal pool or other similar structure where water flows in and out according to the operation of natural forces

**“Public swimming pool”** includes any swimming pool, waterslide, wave pool, hydrotherapy pool or other similar structure to which the general public has access (whether for payment of a fee or not), or which is for the general use of guests in tourist accommodation, other than:

a) A spa pool; or

b) A tidal pool or other similar structure where water flows in and out according to the operation of natural forces.

**“Primary contact activity”** means an activity in which the whole body or face and trunk are immersed or the face is frequently wet by spray. It is likely that some water will be swallowed or inhaled or come into contact with ears, nasal passages, mucus membranes or cuts in the skin. (Examples include swimming, diving, surfing or whitewater canoeing.)

***“Pseudomonas aeruginosa”*** is a bacterium common in water, soil and the environment and if inadequately disinfected, in swimming pools and spas. If present in high numbers in pool and spa water it can cause infections of the skin, ear, urinary and respiratory tracts, wounds and cornea.

**“Recreational water”** includes any coastal and estuarine water (including tidal washed pools and marine baths that interchange with seawater), natural fresh water environs such as rivers or streams, lakes, weirs and dams, and public pools and public spas.

**“Sanitary inspection”** means an inspection carried out in accordance with section 5.4.1 of the National Health and Medical Research Council’s Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water.

**“Secondary contact activity”** means an activity in which only the limbs are frequently wet and swallowing water is unusual. Examples include boating, fishing and wading, where occasional immersion may occur.

**“Swimming season”** means the months of December, January, February and March.

“Threat to public health” means any event or circumstance which is likely to –

a) Damage, injure or compromise public health; or

b) Prevent or restrict the improvement of public health.

**“Thermotolerant Coliform bacteria”** means a class of bacterium often referred to as faecal coliforms that is often used as an indicator of water quality in conjunction with other bacterial indicator species.

# 7. References

National Health and Medical Research Council 2008. *Guidelines for Managing Risks in Recreational Water.* Available at [www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/eh38.htm](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/synopses/eh38.htm)

Department of Health & Human Services 2007. *Recreational Water Quality Guidelines.* Available at [www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/\_\_data/assets/pdf\_file/0014/53321/2007\_RWQG.pdf](http://www.dhhs.tas.gov.au/__data/assets/pdf_file/0014/53321/2007_RWQG.pdf)