

**Submission to the
Independent Pricing and Regulatory Tribunal
Ref: Sydney Water Corporation**

Introduction

Since June 1999 all community swimming pools and aquatic venues have been charged a 70% discharge factor when disposing of pool backwash water to sewer.

The main issue that must be addressed in this circumstance is that as a result of the discharge factor being applied there is a disincentive for the aquatics industry as a whole to recycle water.

Points for Consideration

The technology for filtering backwash water for use on lawns and in toilets is now well established. With the 70% discharge factor there is no incentive to recycle since facilities will be charged anyway for the disposal of water to sewer, even if they do recycle.

By metering the water that is actually disposed to sewer and charging accordingly there is an incentive for local authorities to invest in filtration and recycling. There are obvious environmental advantages particularly in this time of drought.

On average, every community pool disposes of 25,000 litres of backwash water per week, or **1.3** million litres annually. When the total number of pools in the Sydney Water area is taken into consideration. This represents a substantial saving of a scarce resource.

The Hunter Water Corporation charges a 50% discharge factor, which brings into question the criteria for establishing the discharge factor rate.

The Aquatics and Recreation Institute, a professional association of all aquatic managers, and LGov NSW have both given support to this initiative.

Recommendation

That the current 70% Discharge Factor be replaced by direct measurement of and payment for water discharged to sewer, or an alternative that would act as an incentive for Councils to invest in capital works for the recycling of pool, backwash water.

Stephen Blackadder
GENERAL MANAGER