

National Campaign Policy on Environmental Release of Effluent

Surfrider Foundation Australia strongly opposes the release of treated effluent into natural surface waters (natural wetlands and lagoons and rivers) and ocean waters either via near shore outfalls or deep-water outfalls. There is widespread and very clear epidemiological and anecdotal evidence that demonstrates increased health risks to swimmers and surfers using surface waters and ocean waters in areas that receive treated effluent.

Surfrider Foundation Australia advocates the following:

- Treated effluent should be released to the environment only after all possible means of releasing or recycling it have been identified and eliminated through a comprehensive and transparent process that involves the community. Other means of environmental release include deep well injection or aquifer recharge, however these have their own pollution problems associated primarily with contamination of groundwater.
- Prior to any environmental release treated effluent is ‘polished’ to an advanced tertiary treatment or Class A level by means of microfiltration, ultra-filtration, activated carbon, ozone disinfection, UV disinfection, and/or treatment in a managed wetland or lagoon.
- Chlorine use, often required by regulatory authorities, should be kept to a minimum by high levels of pre-treatment (as noted above) and advanced chlorination methods such as Chlorine Dioxide should be used rather than Sodium Hypochlorite dosing.