

## Toowoomba Decides

# WATER POLL

Special Edition

Authorised by Clive Berghofer, 13 Qantas Court, Toowoomba.

July 2006

## Clive says 'NO'

**Clive Berghofer**

VOTING 'NO' to adding recycled sewage to Toowoomba's drinking water will place all options, including recycling, on the table.

A 'yes' vote limits Toowoomba to drinking recycled sewage water with no detailed examination of the other options.

I have spoken out against Mayor Dianne Thorley's Water Futures project because I am very concerned for Toowoomba's future if recycled sewage water is introduced into our city's drinking supply.

Toowoomba is my life and apart from owning a holiday unit at the Gold Coast, my entire fortune is invested in this city.

Likewise, the numerous annual donations I contribute to educational, health and sporting organisations remain largely in the local community.

Of the \$2.6 million I donated last year, the only money that left this city was the funds I donated to QIMR in aid of cancer research, a disease that affects many citizens within the Toowoomba community.

For these reasons Mayor Thorley has accused me of being vocal on this issue because I have vested interests in Toowoomba. Of course I do, and so does

every citizen who is employed within the region or owns a home or business in this city.

We all have vested interests in Toowoomba and I am sure none of us want to lose our jobs or see the value of our properties decline because Toowoomba's clean, green image has been tarnished.

Our Garden City image took years to build up. Now we risk tearing it down.

Toowoomba's image is one of my biggest concerns. Ever since the council began promoting the idea of recycling sewage water for drinking purposes, Brisbane and Sydney newspapers have branded our city "Poowoomba" and "S#@t City".

As a result, people throughout Australia have the perception that Toowoomba's drinking water could possibly contain the remains of faeces, chemicals, drugs and mortuary waste.

Despite extensive local campaigning by Council to promote the water's safety, a large percentage of Toowoomba's residents are still very sceptical.

If the locals are not satisfied, how on earth will outsiders be convinced to visit, invest in or move to our city? They won't.

As a result, thousands of interstate tour-

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**If we are perceived as drinking sewage water Toowoomba's clean green image will be destroyed. Vote NO on July 29.**

## Here are some of the options



**Is this our city's water future? Surely not! There is absolutely no community anywhere on earth that deliberately uses sewage as a source of drinking water.**

TOOWOOMBA has every option available to it that other communities in South East Queensland have.

Plus we have water to our west that has not been properly investigated. A few options we need to consider include:

**SHORT TERM**

**Artesian bores** are the most immediate source of water. Their enormous potential needs to be wisely and carefully utilised.

**MEDIUM TERM**

Joining the **South East Queensland Water Grid** is a viable option for Toowoomba. The State Government is spending billions of Queensland taxpayers' money shoring up the water supply in SEQ with dams and interconnecting pipelines backed up by seawater desalination. Despite Cressbrook Dam's location – just 30km from Lake Wivenhoe – Toowoomba Mayor Dianne Thorley has chosen not to be part of that solution.

**Norwin Water** from the irrigators on the central Darling Downs contains a sustainable underground supply of 27,000 megalitres each year. A sustainable volume of this water could be used immediately to lift restrictions in Toowoomba until longer-term options are brought on line.

**Coalition Water Policy page 3**

Massive quantities of **Coal Seam Gas Water** are being produced at Dalby and Chinchilla. These towns are drought-proofing themselves with this water. They have received significant subsidies from the Federal and State Governments. Toowoomba City Council has never seriously explored this option.

**LONG TERM**

The option of **A Dam at Emu Creek** has been dismissed by Council far too hastily. Peter Beattie says his Mary River Dam will be producing water by 2011, long before Water Futures recycling comes on line. A dam at Emu Creek would produce as much water as Perseverance and Cressbrook dams combined.

This option is all the more viable, given that Peter Beattie has changed his "no dams" policy as South East Queensland's water crisis has worsened. Why not a dam for Toowoomba's long term needs?

While Water Futures may be a cheap option in the short term other options provide more water for longer, making them more cost effective in the long

# Toowoomba deserves better!



Water from sewage is not the road we need to go down

## Rosemary Morley Citizens Against Drinking Sewage

MAYOR Thorley wants to introduce a recycled sewage water scheme to Toowoomba which will result in at least 25 per cent recycled sewage water coming out of your kitchen and bathroom taps.

It's an experiment. No other city in the world asks its residents to drink recycled sewage water at the high rates proposed by Council.

Whether you are at home or whether you buy a cup of coffee or eat at a restaurant in Toowoomba, visit a friend or at work, if this scheme goes ahead, you will be swallowing recycled sewage water.

This is NOT a road we need to go down. We have many other water options available and these should be seriously examined by Council.

Council claims these other options are more expensive but their figures are rub-

bery and the cheapest is not always the best.

Council claims that there will be no Federal funding for other options but this is false and misleading. Council's recycled sewage water scheme will NOT mean the end of water restrictions or the end of bucketing water for your garden.

***"This is not a road we need to go down."***

It's time to tell Council to put the other options back on the table so that a real solution to Toowoomba's future water needs can be implemented.

On 29 July, you have an opportunity to say No to Council's recycled sewage water experiment. You have the opportunity to say that you won't be Mayor Thorley's lab rat. Please send Mayor Thorley and the Council a clear message.

## Our water options

from page 1

term. This is the sort of visionary thinking lacking in Council.

If you want to sell the idea of drinking water reclaimed from sewage then obviously you must convince people that there are no other options.

Have you ever been asked what water supply you would prefer or if you would like to pay a little more and have unrestricted water even during times of drought?

All available options should be independently and accurately costed taking

into account funding arrangements, operating costs and when water would be available.

These options should then be presented and explained to the community pointing out exactly what the effect would be on both their Water Rates and General Rates in dollars per year.

Toowoomba City Council has dismissed options without community consultation and embarked on an irrational fear campaign about running out of water.

Water Futures results in no water until 2013 and then only an inferior, limited supply of recycled water.

# 'NO' puts all options on table

from page 1

ists and families will bypass Toowoomba and choose another Queensland city.

Our reputable food industry will also suffer as consumers in Australia and overseas question the safety of products manufactured in Toowoomba. This could put jobs at risk.

Can the city afford to lose tourism, industry and development by allowing recycled sewage water into our drinking system?

Despite these concerns Mayor Thorley continues to argue that image and perception are not valid arguments for objecting to recycled sewage water, but from personal experience I have to disagree.

Having built and owned the Wilsonton Hotel in 1972, this establishment boasted one of the highest turnovers in Australia for many years.

In the 1980's I developed a piece of land

***"Another dam, possibly at the Emu Creek site."***

nearby and considering the hotel's close proximity and Australia's growing reputation for producing excellent wines, I chose to use this theme when selecting street names for the estate.

In turn, a Mater Prize Home and a number of quality homes were built in streets including Champagne Crescent, Traminer Drive and Shiraz Court.

However, a downturn in the real estate market at the time resulted in my competitors labelling the subdivision "Plonk Estate" in order to reduce sales.

Despite many attempts to restore the estate's image, this derogatory name continues to stick and property values in the area remain low some twenty years on.

Image is important and with labels such as "Poowoomba" already affecting Toowoomba's growth, I am concerned what will happen to the city's reputation and residents' property values if the recycled water project is implemented.

Mayor Thorley's team has also called me uneducated, conservative and even a "flat-earther" because I question the technology that Council claims is capable of turning recycled sewage into safe drinking water.

In my 71 years, I have seen a number of safe scientific breakthroughs that have since proved life threatening to humans.

Who could forget thalidomide, Agent Orange or asbestos? As a builder, I remember when asbestos was introduced and how this new product became the answer to many construction problems.

Unfortunately I embraced this product and some 40 years on, I now question my own health as colleagues from the old days are suffering agonising deaths from mesothelioma (asbestos cancer).

I am sure cigarettes weren't considered life threatening either when they were first marketed. I am curious how many people today feel comfortable living near high voltage power lines since their safety has been questioned.

With a number of scientists still uncertain about recycled drinking water, I believe citizens have every right to question its long term safety.

***"Who could forget thalidomide, Agent Orange or asbestos?"***

Mayor Thorley does not fall to the ground immediately after sipping sewage water from Singapore but who knows the fate of Toowoomba's residents after drinking, bathing and cooking in it for 30, 40 or 50 years.

As a Toowoomba resident and past alderman and mayor of this Garden City I am also disgusted that six councillors decided to waste \$460,000 of rate-payers money to campaign that Water Futures is the only viable option.

This enormous amount of money could have gone a long way towards drilling bores to actually help solve our crisis.

In 1976, as a Councillor, I fought hard to introduce water meters to the city to encourage water conservation. Then I worked tirelessly to gain approval for the construction of Cressbrook Dam.

I was recently reminded by a local radio announcer that shortly after the completion of Cressbrook Dam, I declared that this dam ensured Toowoomba a water supply for 12 years.

But what infrastructure was put in place by more recent Councils to guarantee future supplies. Nothing. Now it is too late!

Water Futures will not allow residents to reconnect their hoses to water their gardens and like most Council projects, the rate-payers will pay much more than the \$68 million projected.

Level 5 restrictions look set to commence next month and even if the Water Futures project is accepted, water from this scheme would not be online until 2013, so what do we do until then?

Our lifestyle here in the Garden City is

under threat. Water Futures is not the answer!

I have looked at lots of options that our short-sighted councillors have rejected.

Another dam must be built, possibly at the Emu Creek site. This is the only option that will guarantee a long-term supply.

In the short term, I believe that Council engineers need to take a closer look at bores, including a larger extraction from the Great Artesian Basin than is currently planned.

The Norwin Water option is a good medium term option that should not be ruled out. However Council's projected costs for piping treated Wetalla water to Norwin farmers in exchange for drinkable underground water seem excessive.

This sustainable supply would be online much sooner than 2013 and could provide water for Toowoomba residents until dam construction is completed.

Also, as one of south-east Queensland's major cities, Toowoomba needs to be included in Premier Beattie's Water Plan which was recently announced. Like the rest of south-east Queensland, the citizens of this city are also taxpayers, so why did Mayor Thorley fail to secure a position for Toowoomba in the Premier's plan?

I appeal to voters to consider this water issue seriously as I have grave concerns for Toowoomba and its citizens if recycled sewage is introduced into our drinking supplies.

For the future of the city vote NO on July 29.

**Clive Berghofer**

**For more information, please feel free to phone me on 0409 330 555.**

# We are the lab rats!

TOOWOOMBA people are being used as lab rats in a world-first experiment.

In its submission for money, Council tells Prime Minister, John Howard that Cooby Dam will be a "living laboratory".

This might come as a shock to Toowoomba people who have been constantly told the technology is proven and used all over the world.

If this was so, why do we need a "living laboratory" and three to five years of intensive CSIRO monitoring?

But aren't lots of countries recycling sewage water for drinking?

Well, the United States-based multinational company, CH2MHill, built a demon-

stration reverse osmosis plant in Singapore to reclaim water from that city's sewage during the early part of this decade.

More than ninety-nine percent of Singapore's reclaimed water is used for industrial purposes such as making computer chips and batching concrete.

Less than one percent is allowed in the drinking water in the hope that people will grow to trust it. There are plans to increase the percentage to two percent over the next five years.

But in an indication of where Singapore's water future lies, the island nation last year commissioned the biggest seawater desalination plant in Asia to provide clean drinking water. Recycled water is



**The Toowoomba experiment. Cooby Dam the living laboratory.**

not acceptable to the Singaporeans.

In Orange County, to this day, the public are largely unaware that a small percentage of their drinking water may have contained recycled sewage effluent which was used to recharge underground aquifers and provide a seawater barrier.

It takes many years for the water to seep back towards their bores.

Toowoomba's Water Futures is vastly different. Toowoomba City Council proposes that we be the first in the world to deliberately extract 25 percent of our drinking and domestic water from the back of a sewage treatment plant.

Even CH2MHill, Council's engineering

and community education adviser, says twenty-five percent is high by world standards and would need special monitoring.

The NSW Premier, Morris Iemma recently announced a major sewage water recycling project in Sydney. When asked why he didn't propose to use it for drinking he said "there are still unresolved issues with the health authorities".

With a looming water crisis we should stick to tried and true water technology to give Toowoomba a long term sustainable new supply of water.

This is not the time to start experimenting with new technology never tried before.

## Viable, costed options tabled

THE Queensland Coalition has announced a \$100 million water package so Toowoomba residents will not have to drink recycled sewage.

It includes \$27 million towards immediately buying 5000 megalitres from Norwin district irrigators on the Darling Downs.

**Farmers have a fully costed plan to sell the water at competitive prices delivered to Toowoomba.**

**The scheme has been certified by Farr Evrat engineer David Lord who says the water, which has been consumed by Pittsworth and Millmerran residents for decades, can easily be blended to comply with Australian Drinking Water Guidelines.**

This would supply the same amount of water as Council's sewage recycling scheme but for \$5 million less for the ratepayer. It would deliver water to the city more than five years before Water Futures.

The Coalition would also fast track the Great Artesian Bore to quickly get 2000ML on line to further address the current crisis.

In the medium term, \$60 million has been pledged to bringing some of the vast

quantities of water produced from the coal seam gas fields to Toowoomba.

In the long term, the Coalition has pledged to build the massive Emu Creek Dam, setting aside \$10 million for property purchases in its first term of Government.

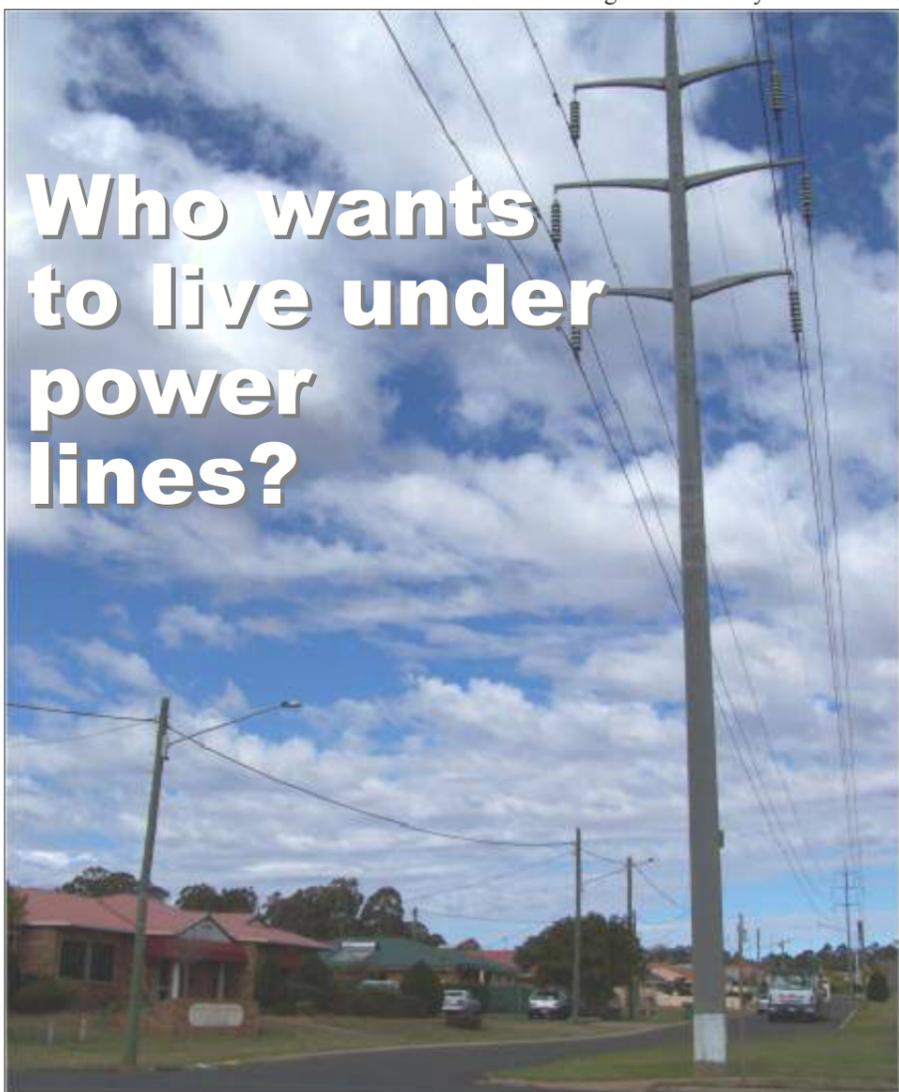
Construction would be completed in its second term.

The suite of options was announced this month by Shadow Water Minister Jeff Seeney, Member for Toowoomba South, Mike Horan, Member for Cunningham Stuart Copeland and Member for Darling Downs Ray Hopper.

It has the support of Coalition candidate for Toowoomba North Lyle Shelton.

"The Beattie Government is spending \$2.9 billion securing fresh water supplies to Brisbane but has given \$23 million to Toowoomba so its residents can drink recycled sewage," Mr Seeney said.

"The State Government needs to make a commitment to Toowoomba, like it is doing for Brisbane, and that's what we would do should we win at the next State election."



Who wants to live under power lines?

**Despite science, most choose not to live under power lines.**

DESPITE science that says living under high voltage power lines is safe, most people choose not to build their houses there.

Toowoomba City Council recently refused a development application for a childcare centre because it was positioned under high voltage power lines.

The difference between high voltage power lines and consuming recycled sewage water is that people have a choice with power lines.

It is perfectly logical and valid for peo-

ple to take a conservative approach to new science – particularly when it comes to long term effects.

If Toowoomba allows water reclaimed from sewage to enter the town-water, people may take the same approach as they do with power lines and decide to build or buy their homes in another city.

Will the 75,000 people moving to Queensland each year decide to live in Toowoomba with the uncertainty of recycled water, or will they choose elsewhere?

### The Coalition Plan

<b>\$3m for GAB bore</b>	<b>Cost to ratepayer \$3m</b>
<b>\$27m to buy Norwin water</b>	<b>Cost to ratepayer \$13m</b>
<b>\$60m coal seam gas water</b>	<b>Cost to ratepayer Nil</b>
<b>\$10m for Emu Creek Dam</b>	<b>Cost to ratepayer Nil</b>
<b>\$100m Total Coalition commitment</b>	
<b>\$16m Total cost to ratepayer</b>	

### The Thorley/Beattie Plan

<b>\$18m Ratepayers' cost to have water from sewage</b>
<b>\$23m Beattie's commitment to drinking sewage</b>

# Water restrictions in place until the drought breaks



Mayor Thorley's plan won't end bucketing

## Recycling - too little, too late

PROVIDED it rains and there is something to recycle, the city might be able to get water reclaimed from sewage by 2013.

Once implemented, Water Futures means on-going tough restrictions for the next 20 years.

It's ability to supply for this period depends on screwing down our water usage even further to 200 kilolitres per property per year.

***"Water Futures means tough ongoing restrictions for the next 20 years"***

This is a massive reduction below what we have been used to and is ten percent below what we have been surviving on during the tight drought restrictions of

## The choice should be ours

SMOKING is a choice. For health reasons some people choose not to smoke, while others are less worried and choose to indulge in the odd cigarette.

But when it comes to choosing what water flows from our taps, we have no choice other than what the Council provides.

Having your own tank is not a solution

2004 and 2005.

Twenty more years of tough restrictions doesn't sound like a water supply.

Industry has already become the first casualty of Toowoomba City Council's poor planning and the badly thought out Water Futures project.

This follows the announcement that there will not be enough water to supply the promised 500ML allocation of recycled water for use at the Charlton Wellcamp Industrial Estate because Council needs it for drinking.

This has far reaching implications for the viability of that industrial estate and is a bad sign for future growth for Toowoomba.

Recycling as proposed by Water Futures is not a reliable water source and we should be putting our money towards something worthwhile, a real water supply.

either, because when you dine out the coffee, post mix drinks, ice and other food will all be made with recycled water.

We can choose not to smoke, but this poll is the only chance to choose the water that flows from our taps.

Make your own choice. Vote NO on July 29.

THERE will be a total ban on watering gardens and using hoses until the dams are filled to at least 40 per cent capacity.

***"Recycled sewage is not a water supply"***

The only way the dams are going to fill is from heavy rain.

Recycling is not a water supply. Toowoomba needs a new supply and the sooner we source one the sooner we can use hoses again.

A new water supply could be in the form of swapping drinking water with irrigators in exchange for treated recycled water to irrigate their cotton.

A new water supply could be in the form of bringing the abundant supply from the gas fields where it is being left to evaporate. This is a waste.

At the same time we should be adopting the same strategy as the rest of south-east Queensland and considering building Emu Creek dam as a long term water supply.

Recycled sewage is not a water supply.

## Water Book figures don't add up!

**You can't get 11,000 megalitres of water out of 8,000 megalitres of sewage.**

THERE are less than 8,000 megalitres a year of sewage coming out of Toowoomba. This is 10 per cent less than last year.

We've all done the right thing and become water wise, cutting down on how much water goes to the sewer and bucketing laundry water to the garden.

With Level 5 restrictions the amount of water ending up at Wetalla will drop even further.

When you look at page 23 of the Council's Water Book it says *"What can we do with all that extra water?"*

Council proposes to reclaim all the following water from 8,000 megalitres of sewage:

**5000ML/y** of water will be returned to Cooby Dam for indirect potable reuse.

**2000ML/y** of water will be supplied to a mine for coal washing.

**1000ML/y** of water to supply the Hampton Irrigation Area.

**500ML/y** of water for non-potable urban domestic use at Highfields.

**1000ML/y** of treated water will be allocated to Millmerran Power Station.

**500ML/y** of water will be available for Charlton Wellcamp Industrial Area.

**1000ML/y** of water down Gowrie Creek to supplement its natural flow.

**11,000 megalitres** is my calculator's sum of all that water.

Now I know Reverse Osmosis is a wonder technology but this is ridiculous. How can 8,000ML of sewage become 11,000ML of water?

The first casualty will be the Charlton Wellcamp Industrial Area. So how good is this scheme for business?

The next casualty will be flows down Gowrie Creek. So how good is this scheme for farmers and the environment?

Mayor Thorley's Water Futures is a badly thought out, fundamentally flawed idea.

### On the Internet

**A number of internet sites discuss the Water Debate and allow you to express your own views on Toowoomba Water Futures:**

<http://waterfutures.blogspot.com>

<http://4350water.blogspot.com>

<http://lyles-blog.blogspot.com>



# Oceans of water going to waste

PREMIER Peter Beattie says drinking recycled sewage is the Armageddon solution. He goes on to say it is not Government policy for people to drink it. Why are we different?

Dalby has secured federal and state funds to bring water, the natural by-product of gas, from the Surat Basin for drinking water and will recycle wastewater for parks and gardens.

The cost of the \$10 million project will be funded with \$3.33 million from the Australian Government to be matched by the State Government, \$1.3 million from Arrow Energy and \$2 million contributed by Dalby Town Council.

This option is available to Toowoomba as well and could provide a sustainable water supply long into the future.

There are many ways coal seam gas water can be used in a Darling Downs water grid that will result in water for Toowoomba.

These and many more options have all been dismissed far too lightly with no proper figures available for us to make choices. Even the Councillors have been kept in the dark about the detail of these options.

Toowoomba has all of the options that are available to other people who live in Southeast Queensland plus these other options of water on the Darling Downs.

Council has paid the US multinational CH2MHill big dollars to convince our citizens to accept recycled water as normal and our only option.

CH2MHill is the only company in the world that builds the sort of treatment plant proposed for Toowoomba. Should they be so prominent in giving advice?

To lock in to the controversial recycling option that doesn't really provide any new water is not the smartest thing we can do.



**This water is a by-product of natural gas. Dalby and Chinchilla are using this natural water to drought proof their towns. Gas companies are committed to finding the best possible use for this water.**

## \$460,000 'Yes' money makes recycling hard to swallow

IF drinking recycled sewage water is based on proven science and accepted by communities around the globe, why did Council vote itself \$460,000 of our money to promote the "Yes" case only?

This is a whopping \$7000 per day in the lead up to the July 29 poll.

The last time Australians voted in a referendum of any type was in 1999 during the republic debate.

At this time, both sides were allocated an equal amount of public money - \$7.5 million each - to promote their respective cases.

By only funding the 'yes' case, Council has selfishly affronted the Australian value of giving everyone a "fair go".

It is interesting to note that Malcolm Turnbull, who featured in the republican referendum, was more than happy to take the public money.

Yet in our poll, he is happy to let the "no" side languish while he cheers on Di-anne Thorley's "yes" campaign.

The massive amount of money used to promote Water Futures could have been better spent further improving life for Toowoomba residents.

We must remember, after all, it is rate-payers' money that is being spent on this campaign and Council is only telling half the story.

### Town water is not just for drinking

MAYOR Thorley says if you don't like drinking recycled sewage water, get a tank or buy bottled water.

But what happens when you buy a coke at McDonalds or your local pub? Postmix machines run on town water.

If you drink coffee, 25 per cent of the water flowing through the mains to the coffee machine will have come from a sewage treatment plant.

And what will you be cooking your vegetables in? Cleaning your teeth with? What water is used to mix the dough for your daily bread?

You know that warm, soothing bath you indulge in occasionally or the water you use to bathe your newborn, that will be recycled water as well.

Mayor Thorley's plan means objectors and supporters will be totally immersed in recycled sewage water.

### Tanks for the advice, Greg

Yet another option dismissed by Council is fitting rainwater tanks to every house in Toowoomba.

Installing a rainwater supply system at point of sale on all buildings enables financing at lowest cost as part of the sale transaction.

The cost of installing a 5000 litre rainwater supply system to an average house is \$2,750 (including GST).

Provided all houses are fitted Toowoomba will save 30 per cent of the drinking water supply when rainwater is substituted for mains drinking water in every building.

The yield from a 5000 litre rainwater tank for a separate house is greatest when rainwater is used for clothes washing, toilet flushing and hot water.

It is physically possible to install rainwater supply for every building in Toowoomba within three years. The proposed sewerage recycling plant will cost \$68 million and produce 5000 megalitres to 6000ML a year.

The cost of water is estimated at 80 cents per kilolitre including capital and operating cost.

Rainwater tanks will supply 3000ML a year for \$100 million expenditure by 35,000 households and owners of commercial and industrial buildings. The operating cost of a rainwater system is 40 cents per kilolitre.

Properties with the room should consider bigger tanks. Whilst the costs would be greater, a 20,000 litre tank would be enough to make many families independent of the mains supply. -

**Greg Cameron, Urban Rainwater Systems, Benalla, Vic.**

Water Fact
<b>1940 Cooby Dam</b>
<b>1974 Preseverance Dam</b>
<b>1988 Cressbrook Dam</b>
<b>1993 Water restrictions!!</b>
<b>1994 to 2006 No plan for growth!!</b>
<b>2013 Water from sewage?</b>

Water Fact
<b>Cooby Dam will be closed for fishing and recreation.</b>
<b>Recycled water will be put in it for testing.</b>
<b>Water is precious. Why put Cooby Dam at risk?</b>
<b>Vote NO on July 29</b>

Water Fact
<b>There is absolutely no community anywhere on earth that deliberately uses sewage as a source of drinking water.</b>
<b>Mayor Thorley proposes something no one else has ever done.</b>
<b>Vote NO on July 29</b>

# 'NO' case Councillors united



Councillors Graham Barron, Keith Beer and Lyle Shelton

THE three "No case" Councillors say a "NO" vote will put the other options back on the table.

"We are disappointed Council lightly dismissed the other options", Cr Graham Barron said.

**"People should feel free to vote NO"**

The Councillors are disappointed that a written report on Water Futures has yet not been presented to Council.

"No Government in its right mind will deny Toowoomba the funds it needs to solve its water crisis. People should feel free to vote 'No' so the other options can be considered properly."

Cr Keith Beer said his calls for public

consultation before announcement of the controversial toilet to tap scheme fell on deaf ears.

"I was pushing for Council to go to the four corners of the city and talk to the people about what it was planning," Cr Beer said.

"This only happened after the referendum was forced on Council."

Cr Shelton said Councillors were misled about the options and about recycling in Singapore and Orange County.

"Recycling sewage water for drinking does not have public acceptance in these places, despite the illusion Council is giving the people of Toowoomba".

"Water Futures cannot meet our future water needs and we need a better solution that actually gives our city a new primary water source."

## Food markets at risk

COUNCIL'S Water Futures project has put a question mark over food manufacturing in Toowoomba.

National ice cream manufacturer, Home Ice Cream, has already indicated it cannot use recycled sewage water in its ice creams.

This was stated on SBS's Insight program last year by the company's Don Duffus.

**"We would never use that water"**

"We would never use that water. Whether it was proved to be 100 per cent or not, you can't take that concept to market. You can't have the people of this country thinking a product has some question mark over it."

Toowoomba's other national ice cream manufacturer, Weis, has not yet stated its position. Although footage of its factory has been used in a Council video to pro-



mote drinking recycled sewage.

The Mayor of Gatton Shire, Steve Jones, says two Toowoomba-based food manufacturing businesses have already expressed interest in re-locating to his Shire.

Toowoomba has a major meat processing facility which is one of the region's biggest employers.

It is well known that export markets are extremely sensitive about the processes used to manufacture meat products for human consumption.

Why put a question mark on quality?

## Stahmann: 'We may lose markets'

Deane Stahmann

IT SEEMS to me that if Stahmann Farms uses recycled water here in our Toowoomba processing facility we may lose some of our export and domestic markets. Competitors who use non recycled water will have an advantage even if recycled water is just as clean.

No matter that the recycled water is as pure as rain in the outback, there is an emotional factor attached to treated sewage that competitors will exploit.

The continued supply of a competitively priced, high security water supply is critical to the continuation of our business in Toowoomba.

We need to ensure that real activity continues in relation to improving water use efficiency, ground water sharing, trading plans with irrigators and storage management to control evaporation.

*Deane Stahmann*

**"Competitors will exploit the emotional factor"**



### Water Fact

**Dalby will use water from natural gas production for its town water supply and recycled wastewater for parks and gardens. It has secured funding from the Federal Government**

## Long term risks



Extract from the Toowoomba Chronicle Monday July 10, 2006

HOW can anyone say drinking recycled sewage water is completely safe over the long term, when fears over lead in rainwater tanks have emerged?

A Toowoomba City Councillor has been urged to have blood tests after a life-time of drinking tank water that had passed over lead flashing on the roof.

Who knows what health impacts may

affect Toowoomba residents if we become the first in the world to deliberately take our drinking water from the Wetalla sewage treatment plant?

There are 87,000 chemicals known to cause birth defects. For our next generation of children you should demand to know if these chemicals can be detected and removed from recycled water.

## Plumber casts doubt over support

TOOWOOMBA plumber Mick Smith says not all plumbers agree with Council's radical recycled sewage-water-for-drinking plan.

He was responding to media reports that the scheme had the backing of the Master Plumbers Association.

"The MPA represents about 5% of plumbers in Toowoomba", Mr Smith said "and the endorsement was made even then by a small executive committee".

"There are hundreds of plumbers in Toowoomba that were not consulted before this press release was issued."

"It should not be assumed that Water Futures has the support of the plumbing industry," Mr Smith said.

"Having spent 40 years plumbing I meet so many people, the majority of whom don't mind recycling sewage water but not for drinking."

"Give us the facts. Whichever way this goes nothing will work out without rain."

"Recycled sewage for drinking should be the last resort" he said.

### Consider This

**Recycled sewage from Wetalla won't be on-line until 2013. What will we do until then?**

**By 2025 we will have to decide about building a new dam.**

**Let's build a dam now and consider recycling in 2035 when it has been tested and certified safe.**

**CSIRO says test for 3 to 5 years. Council says NO!**

**Only 8% of water pumped each year is used in cities. The rest is used in agriculture.**

# What politicians say

## Food for thought

THERE are no guidelines in Australia or overseas that provide specific safeguards for drinking water reclaimed from a sewage treatment plant.

The water to be returned to Cooby Dam is not pure. It contains 30mg/litre of unknown chemicals and organic compounds that cannot be removed.

Acland Coal Mine has not made any undertaking or agreement in principle to accept Toowoomba's waste stream containing Toowoomba's toxic chemicals.

The recycling plant in Namibia is subject of a High Court dispute. A desalination plant is being built to facilitate economic development.

All options should be independently costed and ongoing costs projected so ratepayers can see the effect on their rates bill. The cheapest option is not the best.

Presenting free movie tickets to anyone attending a Council information session is an abuse of ratepayers' money and an insult to ratepayers' intelligence.

CSIRO has recommended three to five years testing. Council thinks it knows better and is happy to impose this drinking water after 18 months to two years.

A full audit of all water resources on the Darling Downs needs to be published and a regional approach taken to developing a sustainable water solution for all.

With water restrictions in Toowoomba since 1993, how short-sighted of Council to let 2006 come around without an acceptable solution.

No new dam, no Garden City.

DNRM&W dismissed options using "rules of thumb" and without substantiating technical reports.

Water Futures will deny water from Gowrie Creek and destroy the livelihood of farmers.

ANNOUNCING a \$500 million recycling program for Sydney's outer west, New South Wales Premier, Mr Morris Iemma stressed the water would not be for drinking.

"There are still unresolved issues with the health authorities," He told the ABC.

Toowoomba residents are being told a different story about the safety of drinking recycled sewage effluent.

*"It's not a question of politics."*

Toowoomba residents have been told that recycling sewage water for drinking is completely safe and routinely done around the world.

If this is the case, why is Qld Premier Peter Beattie building dams and referring



*"On the basis of information I was given, I said that I would support the project. That information was later found to be lacking in detail and erroneous in terms of support from the community."* – Ian Macfarlane, Member for Groom

to drinking water reclaimed from sewage as an 'Armageddon alternative'.

Malcolm Turnbull sees no need for drinking recycled water and has given Toowoomba the opportunity to choose.

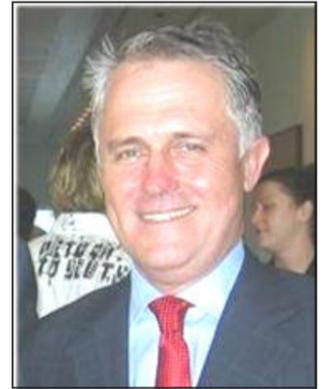
Toowoomba City Council is trying to introduce new untested technology and is completely out of step with elected leaders and representatives of all political persuasions.

It's not a question of politics. No informed politician recommends it.



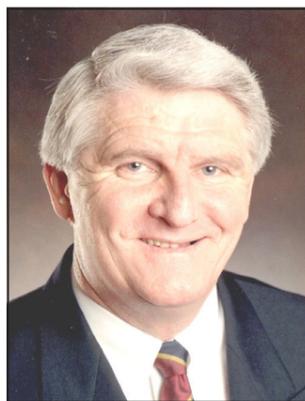
*"This is the Armageddon option. It is not government policy to place recycled water into dams."*

Peter Beattie, Qld Premier



*"From a practical point of view there is simply no need to introduce recycled water into the potable water system."*

Malcolm Turnbull, Member for Wentworth



*"What we do need is a source of water and there are some very significant sources available for Toowoomba."*  
Mike Horan, MLA



*"There are still unresolved issues with the health authorities."*

Morris Iemma, NSW Premier

## Money available for options

WHILE Toowoomba has been offered a contribution of 33 per cent of project costs, other projects have received Federal funding of up to 50 per cent.

North Queensland has received \$40 million towards the \$48 million construction of a pipeline, a transfer pump station and a new water treatment plant. This is a massive 83 per cent funding contribution for city water supply.

If Mayor Thorley has received advice from State or Federal Government that other water options will not be funded, then the Council should be concentrating their efforts on bringing this to public attention.

If the Government is prepared to let the second largest inland city in Australia go broke or run out of water, then the community needs to know about it.

## 'Garden City' lifestyle at risk

TOOWOOMBA has long been known as the "Garden City" of Australia. A title which has been earned over many years, due to the hard work of The Carnival of Flowers' gardeners and promoters.

With the help of Toowoomba's temperate climate and rich organic soil, the city presents a showcase of floral gardens annually. The Carnival of Flowers is a major tourist event which is responsible for injecting large sums of money into our city each year.

Gardening is part of Toowoomba's life-

style and water is needed to keep it thriving. This drought has tested the city's water supply and found it inadequate.

Recycling won't provide any extra water for gardening. Water restrictions will continue and water reclaimed from sewage will be used to supplement drinking supplies and won't be used to sprinkle gardens.

Without a new water supply the Carnival of Flowers cannot survive and instead of being known as the 'Garden City', we will be known as the 'City of Recycled Water'.

### Consider This

**"Those who develop the technologies, who promote them and stand to profit most from them, are not those who suffer their risks. The analysis of technologies is biased toward their use because the technology promoters generally lack the expertise and the incentive to analyse the risks of the technologies for human health and the environment."**

H. Patricia Hynes, "The Recurring Silent Spring" [1989]

## Council is using scare tactics

COMMERCE Queensland has accused council of scare mongering and insufficiently exploring options in light of Toowoomba's water shortage.

Ken Murphy, regional chairman of South-West Queensland Commerce, has said the group which represents businesses across the state has not received a response

from council after raising concerns about the costing and exploration of water shortage options.

"They've shut the shop," Mr Murphy said. "They've got blinkers on and are only looking at the recycling water project".

Although Commerce Queensland did not historically become involved in local po-

litical issues, Mr Murphy said because of the magnitude of the recycling water issue, the group had decided to "step in".

"This issue became political when the second-term Thorley administration failed to plan for Toowoomba's future; when Thorley's council voted to spend \$460,000 of rate-payers' money promoting only the 'yes' case; and when Thorley's council

refused to properly investigate viable alternatives," Mr Murphy said.

"Council is guilty of scare mongering by telling people there are no other options," Mr Murphy said. "They're accusing the 'no' side of scare mongering but they have been doing it because they're telling people we will run out of water if we vote no."

# A Six Star deception

**What is the Water Quality Star Rating System?**

- NO STARS: Wastewater**
  - Domestic sewage and trade waste
  - Uses: No discharge or use without treatment
- 1 STAR: Effluent**
  - Treated to remove large particles
  - Uses: No discharge or use without treatment
- 2 STAR: Effluent**
  - Nearly all biodegradable organic material removed
  - Usually has been disinfected
  - Uses: Discharge into some waterways; Apply to land in controlled conditions
- 3 STAR: Effluent**
  - Nearly all biodegradable organic material has been removed
  - Nutrient content has been reduced
  - Usually has been disinfected
  - Uses (with approval): Discharge to land or waterway in which people swim
- 4 STAR: Fit-for-purpose**
  - Further treated, typically to provide quality suitable for particular purposes
  - Uses: Industrial purposes; Irrigation of public areas; Crops for consumption
- 5 STAR: Drinking (potable) water**
  - Treated sufficiently for direct human consumption
  - Conforms to Australian Drinking Water Guidelines
  - Monitoring must conform to specified quality assurance procedures
- 6 STAR: Purer than drinking water**
  - Treated to a very pure quality
  - Lacks nutrients and minerals
  - Uses: Kidney dialysis; Industrial processes such as pharmaceutical manufacturing; Supplement raw water supply such as a dam or underground aquifer

This Six star classification is not recognised by any regulatory authority.

THE Council's six star water rating is not legally recognised by any statutory authority.

In fact, there are no guidelines for drinking recycled sewage water recognised by any government in Australia.

It is disappointing that the six-star rating is presented to the public as an officially recognised water rating system.

This system of rating wastewater has been developed without recognition from any regulatory authorities or the Australian Standards Association.

It has been developed and promoted by the water industry to try and gain acceptance for their technology.

It is ludicrous to imagine a hospital using water directly from a sewage treatment

plant for kidney dialysis regardless of the process involved.

It is purely a marketing tool to try and gain public acceptance of a generally unacceptable water source.

The star system describes effluent not water supply.

## What scientists say

MUCH has been said about science in the Water Futures debate.

Mayor Thorley continually claims that the science is proven and if you say otherwise you are branded a scare-monger.

It has even been said that if you don't accept the science, you are a "flat earther".

Well, here's what the CSIRO says about Council's world-first plan to source 25 per cent of a community's water supply from a sewage treatment plant.

**"Toowoomba's new recycled sewage water will need an: Intensive Monitoring Phase – for say 3 to 5 years post plant start-up".**

This statement is contained in a briefing note from Colin Creighton, Director, Water for a Healthy Country, CSIRO National Research Flagship.

The briefing was released to the public by Member for Groom, Ian Macfarlane.

The Environment and Heritage Protection Council says: **"It is important to take into account emerging chemicals, for which there is little or insufficient toxicological information."**

If there are no tests for these chemicals, how can the people of Toowoomba have confidence that they have been removed?

A Parliamentary Library Research Brief by Dr Dimitriadis recommended caution on recycled water.

Perhaps Council only listens to the few scientists that support their plan.

## Ratepayer funded campaign used to mislead voters

MAYOR Thorley's \$460,000 ratepayer-funded "yes" campaign has been misleading.

Council television advertising says that Water Futures will use the same technology that leading manufacturers of bottled water use.

This is deliberately misleading.

No bottled water company in the world sources its water from a sewage treatment plant – as is proposed by Water Futures.

It is disappointing that bottled water companies have been used to legitimise Dianne Thorley's radical sewage water-for-drinking recycling plan.

Council has imported bottled Singapore water - from a plant that produces water primarily for industrial uses - to be tasted in Toowoomba.

This gives the illusion that Singaporeans

readily accept this as normal drinking water.

The fact is that a ratio of less than one percent of Singapore's drinking water is sourced from recycled sewage.

CSIRO has spoken to Singapore authorities who say the water has not gained public acceptance for general introduction into their water supply.

Council continually tells people the water will be pure. If this is so, why does the CSIRO require three to five years to intensively examine something that is supposedly already pure?

Newspaper advertisement falsely show only pure water being produced.

After mounting a \$460,000 campaign designed to mislead us, how can we trust them to be truthful about our water quality later on?

## Overcoming an irrational fear of dams



Coalition members Jeff Seeney, Stuart Copeland, Mike Horan, Ray Hopper, Lyle Shelton and John Bjelke-Petersen inspecting Emu Creek dam site

WHO hasn't enjoyed a day at a dam? Dams provide a tranquil area for camping, fishing, boating and swimming.

We lay down forests for freeways and gas guzzling cars but are reluctant to dam a valley to provide water for a thirsty city and provide scenic recreation for our city-bound youth.

A small vocal environmental lobby has condemned dams but if a site was found where the environmental impact was minimal and the farmers were happy to sell their stony forest, perhaps this would be a good place to build a dam.

Emu Creek is one such site, just north of Cressbrook Dam and this area was chosen years ago as Toowoomba's next water supply option. The Emu Creek Dam would nearly double the city's surface supplies.

Dams are the community cooperative

water tank. Emu Creek could be built for less than \$3,000 per rateable property, a far more cost effective solution than a rainwater tank on every house.

If used in conjunction with rainwater tanks, the Emu Creek Dam could provide Toowoomba with sustainable water for up to 40 years.

Council's only problem is that it has been "Ruled out by Government". What if there is a change in Government?

Water reclaimed from sewage won't lift water restrictions. Only rain falling into dams can do that.

Don't be frightened of dams, they will sustain you.

## Where has the developer headworks money gone?

WITH Toowoomba on water restrictions since 1993, Toowoomba developer Clive Berghofer questions why nothing has been done to bring another supply on line.

"Councils have been negligent in not doing something, despite the need for a new supply," he said.

"What has happened to all the water headworks charges I and other developers have been paying over the years?"

"I was led to believe that these costs, which are charged on every block I develop, were to be used by Council to fund permanent water infrastructure such as dams."

"Over the years I have contributed millions of dollars to Council for water headworks."

"What has that money been spent on?" Mr Berghofer asked.