



CITY OF CAPE TOWN
ISIXEKO SASEKAPA
STAD KAAPSTAD

Treated Effluent FAQs

(Last update: 1 October 2018)

Visit www.capetown.gov.za/thinkwater for all drought-related information.

Treated Effluent FAQs

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Disclaimer:

This document is subject to frequent updating and should be regarded as a living document which aims to provide clarity on water Augmentation projects.

Treated Effluent FAQs

Availability and access

What is treated effluent?

Treated effluent is recycled sewerage water. The water is piped via a separate network of pipes and can be used for irrigation and industrial purposes. It must NOT be used for drinking water.

Who can use treated effluent, and how can they access it?

The City supplies treated effluent to high water users. These include businesses and industry, sports fields, golf courses, large new developments, schools and construction sites. We also supply it to complexes, businesses and apartment blocks where there is a level of control management, e.g. there are groundsmen or body corporates to ensure it is used safely and legally.

Can treated effluent water be used by individuals or households?

The City cannot supply treated effluent to individuals or households as the use of treated effluent needs to have some level of control management.

Is there enough treated effluent for everyone to use?

Approximately 70% of the water that reaches the wastewater treatment works plants is treated to drinking water quality. Of this, 11% becomes treated effluent. The remaining 30% is returned to the rivers or resources as per legal requirements.

There is currently no shortage of treated effluent, but during the current drought more large-scale, high-use bodies (such as industries, schools, golf course and apartment complexes) are applying to use treated effluent.

Where can large-scale water users (such as businesses and industry, schools, construction sites and apartment blocks) collect treated effluent?

It is only available in certain areas of the city.

Treated effluent can be collected on a large-scale in tankers from the collection points, [but a permit](#) granted by the City must be displayed on arrival. You can view the collection points on the [Water Map](#). Simply click on the layer icon on the top right of the page, then themes and then treated effluent collection.

You can also view [the collection point document indicating](#) all the treated effluent collection points.

Remember: When collecting from the wastewater treatment works, you must adhere to the City's [Treated Effluent By-Law](#).

Is it possible to have treated effluent piped to my property?

Yes. However, the pipe network is only available in certain areas of Cape Town and a connection to the pipe network depends on the location of your property as well as potential water-saving benefits.

Additional lines to the treated effluent pipe network are being considered, and will be based on the biggest demand and where we can yield the largest benefit through the supply of treated effluent.

Generally, the additional treated effluent pipe lines are targeted at large water users, such as businesses and industries, schools, apartment complexes and other places where we can save the most municipal drinking water.

Treated Effluent FAQs

Can individuals and businesses treat and recycle their own effluent on site?

There are a few cases where businesses and factories have been allowed to treat and convert treated effluent to drinking water standards. However, they must meet a number of requirements and a formal application must be submitted to the City.

Please contact Collin Mubadiro at Collin.Mubadiro@capetown.gov.za for more information on this.

What are the criteria for being allocated treated effluent, if there is a limited supply in my area?

As a priority, the City first supplies treated effluent to businesses and industries that we have a contract with. We then supply collection points, where collection is on a first come, first serve basis.

How do I apply to use treated effluent?

Find out more information on how to [apply for treated effluent](#). Your application will be assessed in terms of its availability in your area, your expected use and potential savings in municipal drinking water use.

If you need treated effluent to be plumbed into the building, see more information on submitting an application to [install an alternative system](#). You can also apply directly at the Goodwood municipal office where the Water Demand Management team is based.

You do not need permission from the National Department of Water and Sanitation.

Treated Effluent FAQs

Usage

What can treated effluent be used for, in the form and quality in which it is supplied from the City?

Treated effluent can be supplied to high water users, such as businesses and industry, sports fields, golf courses, large new developments, schools and construction sites.

It can be used 'as is' to irrigate golf courses and sports fields, dampen dust and other applications on construction sites.

You can use treated effluent to flush toilets, but only if the City has approved this. You will need to submit an application to the City to [install an alternative system](#). We will send a water inspector to check that the system will not contaminate the municipal drinking water supply.

Can we use treated effluent in an internal sprinkler system in order to prevent major fires inside a building?

The use of treated effluent for firefighting depends on the level of contact humans have with the area being doused.

Treated effluent cannot be used for any areas that will have direct contact with the human body, including factories, food processing units and packaging warehouses, among others.

If the treated effluent is intended to prevent fires inside any building, the areas need to be disinfected to ensure the safety of the staff.

Does the quality of the treated effluent fluctuate?

We cannot guarantee the quality of the treated effluent. The municipal water supply from the City is still regarded as the primary drinking water. However, treated effluent does meet the standards to be discharged into rivers and used for irrigation.

If I treat treated effluent to higher standards, can I then use it for other things beyond irrigation?

We have allowed some bigger scale businesses and manufacturers to treat treated effluent further. The effluent water is treated to a higher quality, in order to be integrated into their own manufacturing processes.

Please contact Collin Mubadiro at Collin.Mubadiro@capetown.gov.za for more information.

Does treated effluent come with supply consistency guarantees or does the amount being supplied fluctuate?

We cannot guarantee an uninterrupted supply of treated effluent. However, we do attend to any supply and quality issues as soon as possible.

In the case of using treated effluent for irrigation, what happens when the wind blows and potentially contaminated water is sprayed over an area where people can breathe in the chemicals?

Do not irrigate fields with treated effluent while people are using the fields. If you come into contact with treated effluent, please wash your hands and any body part that came in to contact with treated effluent thoroughly with soap.

Treated Effluent FAQs

Cost

Is the charge for treated effluent included in my bill along with other rates, water and sewage items?

Users who have followed the correct processes and have been registered for the supply of treated effluent to their property, will see the cost of their usage on their rates bill. It will be listed as treated effluent supplied through the pipeline to the property. Treated effluent tariffs can be found in the tariff schedule at www.capetown.gov.za/tariffs

It costs R5,30/kl (subject to change) for the collection of treated effluent by tankers at the collection points. Users who have applied and are registered to collect treated effluent at collection points must show their permit when collecting. This information, along with the amount they collect, will be captured and they will be billed accordingly.

Who pays for the infrastructure to have treated effluent piped to properties?

The City covers the expenditure for the infrastructure that connects the treated effluent network system up to the relevant property.

From this point it is the owner's responsibility to cover the costs to distribute the treated effluent onto their property.

Prospective businesses or industries who need an urgent connection will need to pay for their own connection.