



# INDEPENDENT STATE WATER QUALITY COMMISSIONER PLEDGE

## *Deliver Reliable, Clean Drinking Water*

**Nick McKim MP**  
Greens Leader

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[mps.tas.greens.org.au](http://mps.tas.greens.org.au)

The Tasmanian Greens today announced they would create the position of a State Water Quality Commissioner, independent of government and reporting directly to Parliament, with responsibility of ensuring clean, chemical-free drinking water for Tasmanians.

Greens Leader Nick McKim MP, who launched today's policy commitment with Greens Water spokesperson Tim Morris MP, said that Tasmanians have lost confidence in the government's capacity to adequately monitor Tasmania's waterways and to oversee rigorous scientific analysis of samples, so the Greens will establish an independent Commissioner to oversee this vital community service.

The new State Water Quality Commissioner would:

- ☑ Be independent of government
- ☑ Be adequately resourced to oversee Tasmania's water sampling requirements
- ☑ Would oversee independent scientific analysis of contaminated water
- ☑ Have the capacity to respond to community complaints about water quality
- ☑ Make recommendations to Parliament and government relating to water quality and drinking water infrastructure
- ☑ Prepare prosecution briefs of any breach of the Greens' Chemical Trespass legislation
- ☑ Work with the Tasmanian Planning Commission to develop and implement a State Policy on Water Quality
- ☑ Conduct a review of the *Water Management Act 1999*.

"Tasmanians have a right to clean chemical free drinking water. The Greens will deliver this by creating a State Water Quality Commissioner who is truly independent of government," Mr McKim said.

"Many Tasmanians have understandably lost confidence in the quality of their drinking water. The creation of an independent statutory office with responsibility of ensuring good quality drinking water is the first step towards a solution."

“Clean drinking water is not only the right of every Tasmanian, but it is also important for our local economies. Chemical contaminated or muddy water impacts on local businesses, tourism operators and the hospitality industry.”

“Labor and Liberal are too close to the timber industry to deliver clean drinking water and the Greens are proposing that the Water Quality Commissioner be independent of government in order to begin to restore confidence in Tasmania’s drinking water.”

The Greens would resource the Office of the State Water Quality Commissioner with six employees, additional who will support the Commissioner:

- ☑ Three to be reallocated from within the Department of Primary Industries and Water, to conduct sampling and monitoring
- ☑ Three new positions including one dedicated scientist, plus two administrative and research support positions.

Today’s \$1.4 million over three years policy announcement is the latest in the Greens’ comprehensive plan to improve Tasmania’s water quality, with previous commitments including:

- ☑ \$200,000 to investigate the allegations of toxins entering St Helens waterways from *Eucalyptus niten* plantations
- ☑ A Chemical Trespass unit to be resourced and established in the EPA (\$1.3 million over three years)
- ☑ A pledge to introduce Chemical Trespass legislation
- ☑ A pledge to ban the use of the Triazine chemicals
- ☑ \$250,000 for a settling pond scheme to clean up and deliver reliable potable drinking water for the Campbell Town and Ross districts

	2009-10 Budget	2010-11 Forward Estimates	2011-12 Forward Estimates	2012-13 Forward Estimates
	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000	\$'000
State Water Quality Commissioner	...	140	120	120
3 new staff (additional to 3 moved over from DPIW)	...	220	225	230
Establishment and operational costs	...	150	100	100