

## Bushfire and Rainwater Quality Testing

Bushfires have the potential to contaminate rainwater supplies with ash, debris or fire retardants. Information regarding the use of rainwater after a bushfire can be found on the SA Health and Vic Health websites:

<https://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/wps/wcm/connect/Public+Content/SA+Health+Internet/Protecting+public+health/Bushfires/Bushfires+and+rainwater+quality>

<https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/environmental-health-in-the-community/fire-retardants-and-health>

Health departments advise that if the water tastes, looks or smells unusual to assume it has been contaminated. In this case it is recommended that the tank be drained and cleaned before refilling (either naturally with rainwater or by filling with potable water). Alternatively, the water can be used for purposes other than drinking or food preparation such as garden watering or for fire-fighting purposes.

The Australian Water Quality Centre (AWQC) can complete testing on your water to determine any likely water quality issues with fire retardant contamination or general rainwater quality.

AWQC's Customer Service Team is able to check the test results against the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines and provide an initial analysis and reference to SA Health for any specific health concerns.

A cost per sample is listed in the table below and residents can choose individual tests from this list based on their individual circumstances. The AWQC can advise on additional testing requirements if needed.

**A business unit of  
the South Australian  
Water Corporation**

250 Victoria Square/  
Tarnantyangga  
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Level 5/1H Royal Parade  
PARKVILLE VIC 3050

GPO Box 1751  
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[awqc.com.au](http://awqc.com.au)

\$25.00	Ammonia	Found in fire retardant compounds and in Ash and smoke residue
\$28.00	Total Phosphorus	
\$18.00	Sulphate	
\$68.00	Surfactants(detergents)	
<b>\$139.00</b>	<b>+GST</b>	

\$36.00	Coliforms and E. coli	Used as an indicator test to determine bacterial activity in rainwater
\$35.00	Copper	Common metals found in residential plumbing systems
	Lead	
	Iron	
	Nickel	
	Zinc	
	Arsenic	Found in ash and soot following high intensity bushfires
<b>\$71.00</b>	<b>+GST</b>	

AWQC will provide Rainwater Sampling Kits which include all required sample bottles and sampling instructions. The kits will be dispatched to a location chosen by Council for distribution.

Once collected the samples can be returned to the SA Water Kingscote Depot for return to AWQC laboratories.

If you have questions regarding the quality of your water please call the Australian Water Quality Centre (AWQC) on ph. 7424 1514 to discuss if testing is required or email [customerservice@awqc.com.au](mailto:customerservice@awqc.com.au)

Customer Service Unit  
Australian Water Quality Centre

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