

River Pool Water Quality Ratings Information:

Each water quality rating is determined using the based on a statistical average of E.coli (the geometric mean) over the last five samples. This average is compared to rating categories based on EPA Victoria's current environmental quality objectives for primary and secondary contact recreation in freshwater. To give users current information on recreational water quality, the ratings are based on samples taken under all weather conditions and are generally updated weekly.

The ratings are indications of recreational water quality over the previous five weeks, and do not give a measure of risk to the health of river users on any given day, or of the quality of drinking water. River users should take care at all times and not swallow or drink river water. They should also be mindful of other potential hazards such as high flows, unseen objects and litter. Avoid swimming 24-48 hours after heavy rain.

The rating system has four categories:

Good Water Quality - The E.coli geometric mean, based on the last five samples, has remained below the primary contact objective of 200 organisms per 100mL. These sites are generally considered suitable for all forms of recreation. Although the water quality is good, there may still be some potential health risk for some people. On occasions, such as after high rainfall, there may be an increased possibility of contamination from runoff, which may contain animal or human waste.

Fair Water Quality - The E.coli geometric mean, based on the last five samples, is in the range between 201 and 1000 organisms per 100mL. Sites with water quality in this range are considered suitable for boating, but not generally suitable for swimming. River users should use their own judgement when deciding to swim, looking out for signs of stormwater or other pollution. There is a potential health risk for some people from exposure to the water, particularly if swallowed. High rainfall events may increase the risk of contamination from animal or human waste.

Poor Water Quality -The E.coli geometric mean, based on the last five samples, is in the range between 1001 and greater than 5000 organisms per 100mL. Sites with water quality in this range may be used for boating, but they are not suitable for swimming. There is a greater potential health risk to river users from exposure to the water, particularly if swallowed. High rainfall events may further increase the risk of contamination from animal or human waste.

Unsuitable for Recreation Water Quality - The E.coli geometric mean, based on the last five samples, is greater than 5000 organisms per 100mL. Sites with water quality in this range are unsuitable for all water-based recreational activities. There is a higher potential health risk to river users from exposure to the water, particularly if swallowed.

Table 1: E.coli five sample average vs recreational water quality risk rating.

Geomean <i>E.coli</i> org/100ml	Rating
0-200	Good Quality
201-1000	Fair Quality
1001-5000	Poor Quality
Above 5000	Unsuitable for Recreation Quality

For further information please contact Council's Environmental Health Team on 03 5755 0555.