Parks Victoria
Water Quality Annual Report

2025/26



Parks VICTORIA

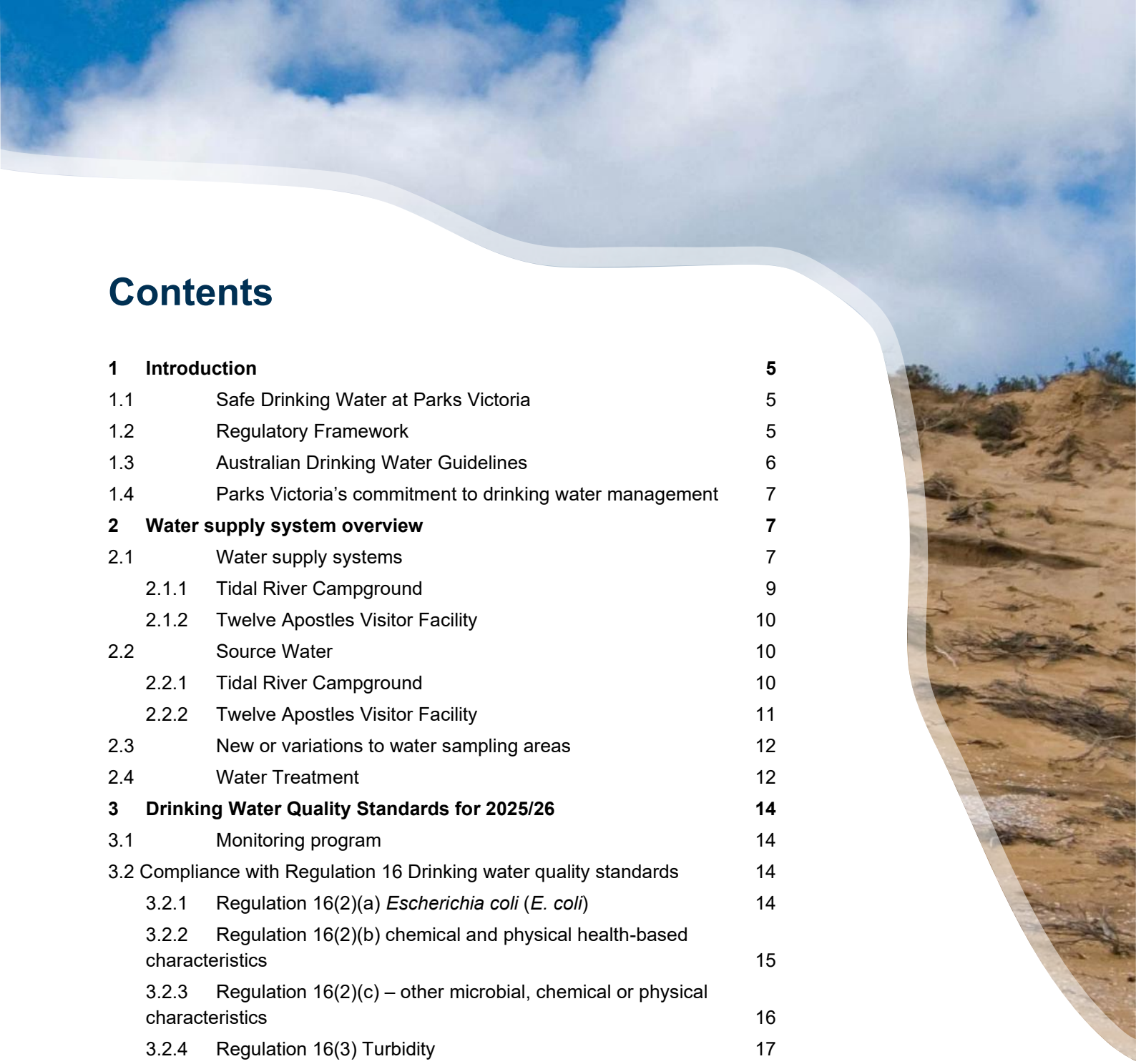


Acknowledgement of Country

The land we know today as Victoria is a land of extraordinary contrast, from vast deserts to alpine snowfields, ancient rainforests to dormant volcanoes, rugged coastlines and inland waterways. This remarkable diversity is more than scenery; it is a living record of culture, connection, and care that stretches back thousands of generations.

Across the parks and reserves in Victoria lie cultural landscapes shaped by Aboriginal peoples through millennia of knowledge, stewardship, and deep relationship with Country. These places tell stories of resilience, ingenuity, and belonging, stories written not only in books, but in the land itself.

Parks Victoria respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners of these lands and waters. We honour their enduring connection to Country and their continuing role as custodians. Together, we commit to protecting and celebrating these landscapes so they remain vibrant for generations to come.



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1 Introduction

1.1 Safe Drinking Water at Parks Victoria

Parks Victoria (PV) is a statutory authority of the Victorian Government created and acting in accordance with the *Parks Victoria Act 2018*. Parks Victoria is responsible for managing a diverse estate of more than 4 million hectares including 3000 land and marine parks and reserves making up approximately 18% of Victoria's land mass, 75% of Victoria's wetlands, and 70% of Victoria's coastline. The estate comprises national and state parks, marine parks and sanctuaries, wilderness areas, regional and metropolitan parks.

Parks Victoria's primary role is to protect and enhance the natural and cultural values of the parks it manages, ensuring parks are healthy and resilient for current and future generations. Parks Victoria also play a pivotal role in connecting people and communities with parks.

At two of its visitor sites, Tidal River Campground in Wilsons Promontory National Park and Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility adjoining Port Campbell National Park (Figure 1.1), PV is responsible for providing drinking water that meets the requirements set by the *Safe Drinking Water Act 2003* (SDW Act) and the *Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2025* (SDW Regulations). At these two sites, PV is called up as a water supplier under the SDW Act and has specific legislative responsibilities it must meet.

Section 26 of the SDW Act requires an annual drinking Water Quality Report for sites regulated under the SDW Act. The report must meet requirements set out in the SDW Act and SDW Regulations and include information on Parks Victoria's water supply systems and water quality performance for the financial year. The report is required to be submitted to the Department of Health (DH) by 31 October each year for the previous financial year and must be made public. This report has been prepared to comply with these requirements and covers the period from 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026, which is referred to in this report as the reporting period.

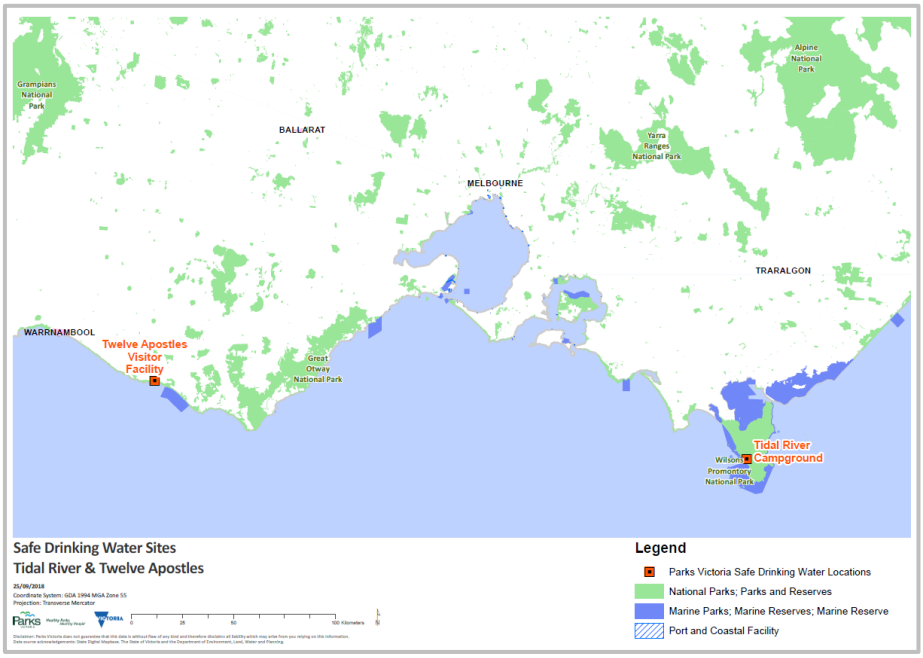


Figure 1.1 Parks Victoria Safe Drinking Water – Water Sampling Areas (WSA).

1.2 Regulatory Framework

The *Safe Drinking Water Act 2003* is the principal legislation that sets the regulatory framework for the supply of safe, high-quality drinking water in Victoria. The key objective of the legislation is to protect public health. The SDW Act defines drinking water as water that is intended for human consumption, and places obligations on water suppliers and water storage managers that must be met, including requirements to:

- Prepare, implement, review and revise risk management plans that manage risks in relation to drinking water.
- Have risk management plans and their implementation independently audited by approved auditors at periods declared by the DH.
- Supply water that complies with water quality standards as specified in the SDW Regulations.
- Disclose to the public information on drinking water quality including the results of any monitoring program it conducts on any drinking water it supplies.
- Notify the DH if drinking water does not comply with water quality standards or of any suspected contamination of drinking water.

The framework incorporates a catchment to tap approach to managing risk associated with drinking water supplies. It promotes preventative and proactive management of drinking water quality.

The *Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2025* make further provision for the supply of safe drinking water in Victoria and provide clarity and additional information on legislated requirements. The SDW Regulations outline items to be addressed and included in risk management plans, the water quality standards that must be met, requirements for water quality sample collection and analysis, and requirements for annual reporting.

Drinking water supplied by Parks Victoria at the Tidal River Campground and Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility must meet the obligations set out in the SDW Act and SDW Regulations.

The first five days of the reporting period the SDW regulations 2015 were still in effect; there were no matters to acknowledge relevant to the previous regulations for those five days. The data for these five days has been included in the assessment of compliance against the 2025 Regulations.

1.3 Australian Drinking Water Guidelines

The Australian Drinking Water Guidelines (ADWG) is the leading authoritative reference for drinking water management in Australia. It defines safe, good quality water, and provides a framework of how to achieve and assure water safety and good management of drinking water supplies.

The ADWG provide a framework for the management of drinking water quality that includes twelve elements as shown in Figure 1.2.

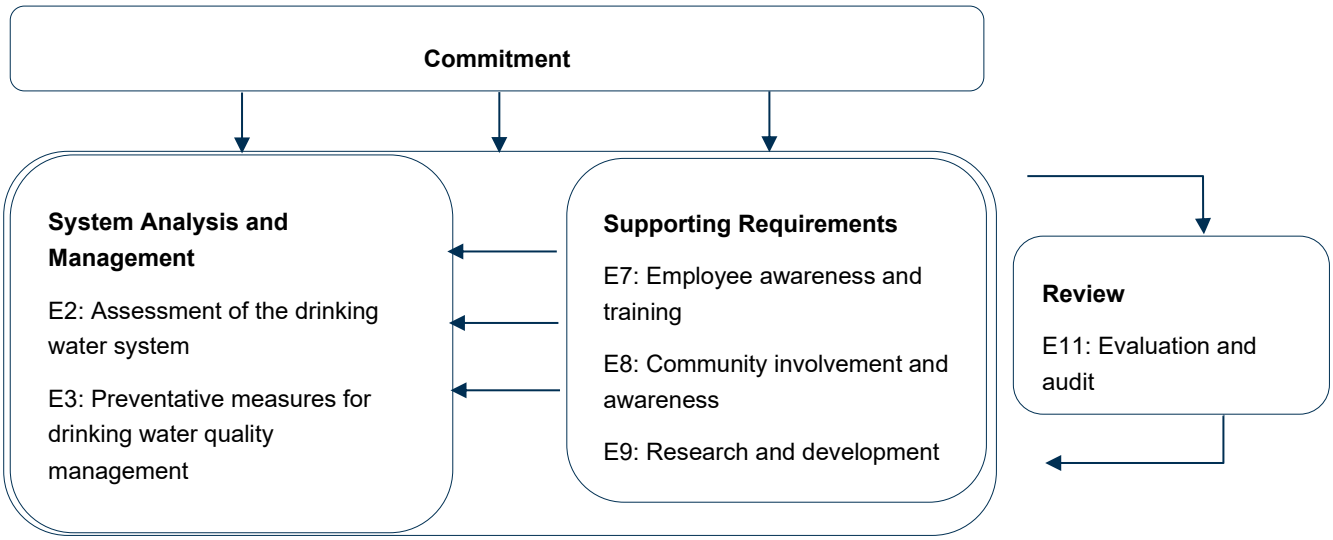


Figure 1.2 Framework for management of drinking water quality (ADWG, 2011).

The ADWG define two types of guideline values for drinking water to assess its suitability for consumption:

- A health-related guideline value specifies the concentration or measure of a water quality characteristic that does not result in any significant risk to health of the consumer over a lifetime of consumption.

- An aesthetic guideline value specifies the concentration or measure of a water quality characteristic that is associated with the acceptability of water to the consumer, such as appearance, taste, and odour.

These health and aesthetic guideline values, together with the water quality standards set in the SDW Regulations, are used as reference in this report.

The Victorian regulatory framework for drinking water is aligned with the approach used in the ADWG.

1.4 Parks Victoria's commitment to drinking water management

Parks Victoria is committed to minimising risk to public health by providing a reliable and safe supply of drinking water at Tidal River Campground and the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility that is delivered in accordance with the SDW Act, SDW Regulations and framework of the ADWG. This commitment is recognised across the organisation and in Parks Victoria's internal operating framework.

To ensure our visitors are provided with safe drinking water, Parks Victoria maintains a safe drinking water program. Parks Victoria's safe drinking water program commits to:

- Complying with the requirements of the SDW Act and SDW Regulations.
- Adopting the twelve elements approach in the ADWG in managing our regulated drinking water systems.
- Managing risks in accordance with Parks Victoria's policy and procedure framework.
- Protecting our drinking water catchments.
- Implementing and reviewing our risk management plans (referred to as safe drinking water risk management plans) to ensure risks to drinking water quality are known and managed from catchment to tap.
- Continually assessing and evaluating water quality and treatment performance.
- Ensuring our people are trained to implement safe drinking water requirements and are equipped to anticipate and manage public health risks.
- Implementing maintenance programs and renewing or upgrading assets where required.
- Remaining aware of water industry research, treatment technologies, and operational practices to ensure continued understanding of drinking water quality issues and their management.
- Continually reviewing and improving practices, performance, and documentation to be the best we can in delivering a safe supply of drinking water to our visitors.

2 Water supply system overview

2.1 Water supply systems

Parks Victoria has two drinking water sites that operate under Victoria's SDW Act and SDW Regulations. A summary of each of the drinking water supply systems is provided in Table 2.1.

There were no changes to the water supply systems or the source water over the reporting period.

Table 2.1: Summary of Parks Victoria's drinking water supply systems.

Water sampling Area	Population supplied (estimated)	Source water	Raw water storages	Treatment Plant	Treated water storages
Tidal River Campground	~600,000 visitors annually	Tidal River. Surface water is harvested from a ~2,000ha catchment, within the Wilsons Promontory National Park. Raw water is detained at a small weir and pumped to the water treatment plant.	No raw water storage.	Tidal River Water Treatment Plant (0.4ML/day treatment capacity). Raw water treatment includes coagulation, flocculation, clarification, filtration, and disinfection.	Treated water is held in a clearwater storage tank before being pumped to two elevated storage tanks. Total storage capacity is typically 1.34ML which equates to ~6 days water storage in peak. In 2024/2025, the total storage capacity was reduced to 1.06ML, due to one tank currently being offline Water is gravity-fed through Tidal River via a reticulated system.
Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility	~2.2 million day-visitors annually	Wannon Water supplied drinking water. Water is supplied by a metered mains pipeline from the Wannon Water Port Campbell drinking water locality network to two storage tanks at the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility.	No raw water storage.	No onsite treatment.	Treated drinking water is stored in two 28,000L storage tanks. It is distributed to the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility on demand, including to drinking fountains, a kiosk, a staff tearoom and visitor amenities.

2.1.1 Tidal River Campground

Wilsons Promontory National Park is one of Victoria's oldest and best-loved national parks. The park is a very popular tourist destination and receives an estimated 600,000 visitors annually, including day-visitors and overnight stays. Tidal River Campground is the main accommodation area within the Park with approximately 2,400 overnight visitors during peak periods, plus day-visitors, staff, volunteers, and contractors.

Tidal River Campground hosts a visitor's centre, general store, and accommodation options including camping and caravan sites, cabins, wilderness retreats and group lodges. The campgrounds are serviced by toilet and bathroom blocks. Staff facilities are also provided at Tidal River including offices, staff housing and maintenance buildings.

The Tidal River WTP supplies drinking water to the Tidal River Campground. The Tidal River WTP is a small conventional package water treatment plant with chlorine disinfection, that was constructed in 1999 and has received multiple upgrades to ensure consistent supply of safe drinking water.

The Tidal River WTP is supplied with raw water from a small weir in Tidal River. Treated water from the Tidal River WTP is stored in water storage tanks and is distributed via gravity to the Tidal River campground water reticulation network. Water usage at the site varies throughout the year based on visitor numbers. This variation in demand is managed operationally.

Parks Victoria is accountable for the management of the Tidal River water supply system, inclusive of the Tidal River Water Treatment Plant (WTP). Requirements include maintaining and implementing the site risk management plan, protecting the source water, operation of the Tidal River WTP in accordance with set criteria to ensure high-quality drinking water, responding to water quality deviations and events, and undertaking reporting requirements.

Whilst PV has overarching accountability for the Tidal River water supply system, throughout the reporting period, PV engaged South Gippsland Water via a contractual agreement to operate the Tidal River WTP in accordance with the Tidal River Campground Safe Drinking Water Risk Management Plan. The engagement of South Gippsland Water was initiated in 2023 in response to a resource gap in water treatment operations. The engagement continued into the 2025/26 period with an increased level of operational support.

A map of the location of the Tidal River Campground in the Wilsons Promontory National Park is shown in Figure 2.1.

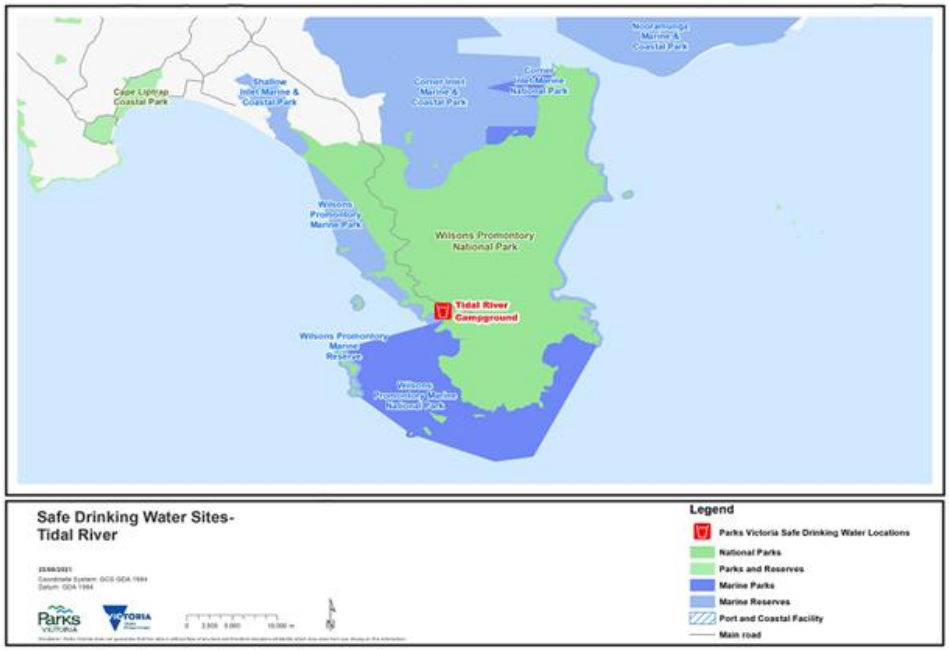


Figure 2.1 Location of Tidal River Campground, Wilsons Promontory National Park.

2.1.2 Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility

The Twelve Apostles are located within Port Campbell National Park and is Parks Victoria's most visited tourist attraction receiving an estimated 2.2 million day visitors annually. The Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility is the main facility at the Twelve Apostles and is located adjacent to the Port Campbell National Park, outside of the national park boundary. The visitor facility provides car parking, a kiosk, and amenities for visitors to the Twelve Apostles and Port Campbell National Park.

The site is supplied with drinking water from Wannon Region Water Authority (Wannon Water) from the Port Campbell drinking water locality via a metered mains pipeline. The drinking water received already meets the requirements of the SDW Act, therefore Parks Victoria's focus of management at the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility is on preventing water recontamination during its storage and distribution.

Water usage at the site varies throughout the year based on visitor numbers. The volume of water supplied to the site for the reporting period was 7.79ML.

Whilst PV has overarching accountability for the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility water supply system, PV has a contractual agreement in place with Wannon Water to maintain the Twelve Apostles water supply system in accordance with the Twelve Apostles Safe Drinking Water Risk Management Plan. Responsibilities include operational and compliance monitoring, asset maintenance, and responding to water quality deviations and events. Parks Victoria retain responsibilities for maintaining the risk management plan and for undertaking reporting requirements.

A map of the location of the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility is shown in Figure 2.2.

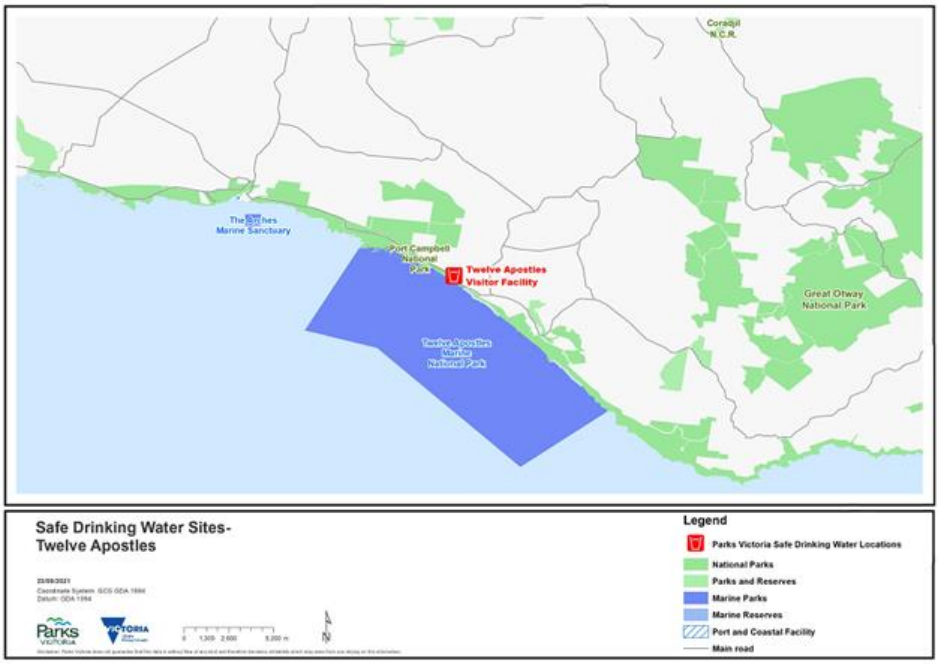


Figure 2.2 Location of Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility, Port Campbell National Park.

2.2 Source Water

2.2.1 Tidal River Campground

The catchment at Tidal River consists of an approximate 2000-hectare conservation zone within the Wilsons Promontory National Park (Figure 2.3). The catchment is managed by Parks Victoria, is densely vegetated and has minimal human activity, limited to 2 km of walking track and 2.5 km of a sealed no-through road.

The catchment has been classified as a Category 2 source water in accordance with the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines section 5.4.3. The condition of the catchment informs the source water classification, and the source water classification is important as it determines the level of water treatment required.

The catchment classification is routinely reviewed to confirm its accuracy and raw water quality sampling is routinely conducted to monitor catchment conditions, microbial quality, and the source water categorisation. Review in the reporting period indicates no major catchment changes and confirmation of the Category 2 Source classification.

Parks Victoria places high importance on protecting the catchment at Tidal River. Catchment protection is the first step in ensuring safe drinking water.

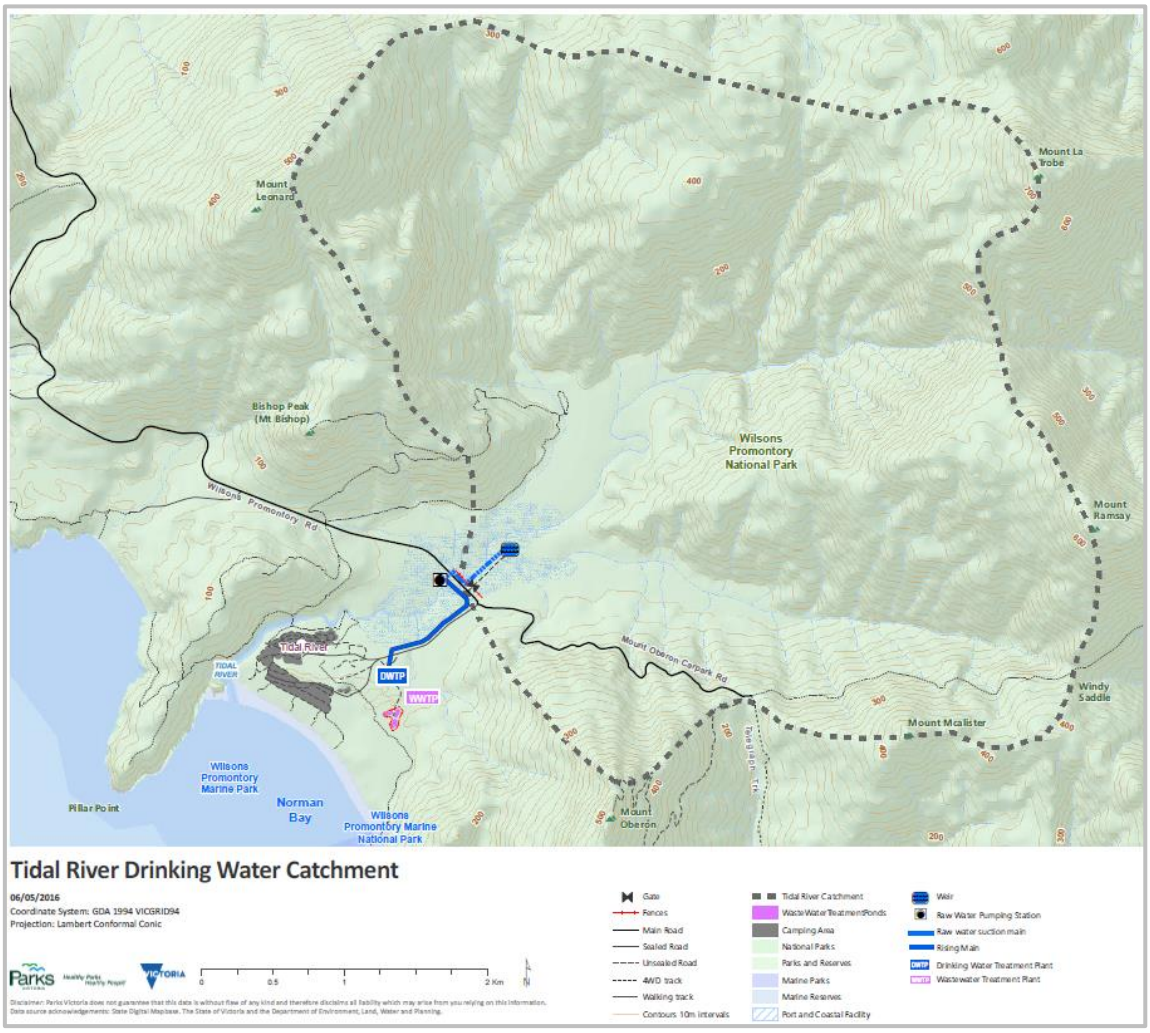


Figure 2.3 Tidal River Campground drinking water catchment.

2.2.2 Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility

The Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility is supplied with water already treated to a drinking water standard by Wannon Water (as a water supplier) via the Port Campbell drinking water locality network. The water is supplied via a mains pipeline in accordance with a drinking water metered supply agreement with Parks Victoria as a customer of Wannon Water.

Wannon Water are responsible for treating water to a drinking water standard and have procedures and processes in place to ensure that drinking water quality is maintained across their Port Campbell drinking water locality network prior to the water being supplied to Parks Victoria. Source water risks are assessed and managed by Wannon Water.

Wannon Water's Water Quality Annual Report provides further source water and treatment information for the Port Campbell drinking water locality. A summary is provided in Table 2.2. Information on water quality

from the Wannon Water Port Campbell drinking water locality is shared as required and in the event of a water quality issue, with no occurrence of the latter occurring in the reporting period.

Table 1.2: Wannon Water Port Campbell drinking water locality information.

Wannon Water Water Treatment Plant	Source Water	Treatment process
Port Campbell	Groundwater from the Dilwyn aquifer	Aeration, filtration, disinfection via chlorine gas

2.3 New or variations to water sampling areas

There were no new or variations to the existing Tidal River Campground or the Twelve Apostle Visitor Facility Water Sampling Areas (WSA) during the 2025/26 reporting period.

2.4 Water Treatment

The water treatment process applied at Tidal River Campground is outlined in Table 2.3. Any substances added to water as part of the treatment process is also included in Table 2.3. There was no change to the treatment process and there were no issues with the application of treatment processes at Tidal River Campground during the reporting period.

At the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility, no water treatment occurs. The site is supplied with water that has already been treated to a drinking water standard and as supported by a water quality risk assessment, further treatment of the water is not required. There were no changes at the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility during the reporting period.

Table 2.3: Drinking water treatment processes – Tidal River Campground and Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility.

Water sampling area	Treatment process	Process description	Added substances(s)
Tidal River Campground	Coagulation	Chemicals are added to the water to enable fine particles to join to form larger particles.	Soda Ash PAC23
	Flocculation	Water enters the mixing compartment where polymer is added, and particles bind into floc particles. Water then travels into the flocculator zone where it is slowly and continuously mixed allowing the formation of larger floc particles.	Polymer
	Clarification	The clarifier receives flocculated water. Particles settle via gravity and water is transferred to the filters.	None
	Dual media filtration	Water is passed, by gravity, through a dual-media (anthracite/silica) sand filter.	None
	Disinfection	Water is disinfected using sodium hypochlorite (chlorine) so that no pathogens remain in the water. An adequate free chlorine is maintained through the treated water storage and reticulation.	Sodium Hypochlorite
	pH correction	pH is adjusted through the addition of soda ash to ensure disinfection, minimise the risk of corrosion in the distribution network and improve water taste.	Soda Ash

Water sampling area	Treatment process	Process description	Added substances(s)
Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility	None	No further treatment of water is required.	None

3 Drinking Water Quality Standards for 2025/26

3.1 Monitoring program

Parks Victoria has developed a water quality sampling program for each site based on the SDW Regulations water quality standards and frequency requirements, along with site-specific water quality risks. Water samples are collected in accordance with the water quality sampling program, and the analysis of the samples is undertaken by an independent National Association of Testing Authorities (NATA) accredited laboratory.

For the reporting period, the water quality standards under the SDW Act and SDW Regulations 2025 applied. SDW Regulation 21(g) requires water suppliers to include information relating to compliance with these water quality standards in their annual report. SDW Regulation 21(n) requires water suppliers to include information related to aesthetic characteristics of drinking water quality supplied.

A summary of sample characteristics monitored at Tidal River Campground and the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility, and their frequency of monitoring, is outlined in Table 3.1. There were no specific changes made to be program to accommodate the SDW Regulations r. 14 Development of water sampling program.

Table 3.1: Water quality monitoring program – Tidal River Campground and Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility.

Sample characteristic	Tidal River	Twelve Apostles
Escherichia coli (*E. coli*)	Weekly	Weekly
Turbidity	Weekly	Weekly
Trihalomethane	Monthly	Monthly
Chloroacetic acid	Quarterly	Not applicable
Dichloroacetic acid	Quarterly	
Trichloroacetic acid	Quarterly	
Metals	Quarterly	Event-based
pH	Weekly/Monthly*	Monthly
Colour	Monthly	Not applicable**
Aluminium	Monthly	Not applicable**
Alkalinity	Monthly	

** pH monitoring occurs weekly from the treated water storage tank and monthly at customer taps.*

*** At Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility, the only aesthetic sample characteristic monitored is pH. As the water is treated to drinking water standard and supplied to the site by Wannon Water's drinking water reticulation network, water supplied does not have any aesthetic characteristics of concern and therefore no additional monitoring of aesthetic sample characteristic is undertaken by PV.*

3.2 Compliance with Regulation 16 Drinking water quality standards

For the purpose of s. 17(1) of the SDW Act, a water supplier must ensure the drinking water supply complies with the Drinking Water Quality Standards set out by SDW Regulation 16. A summary of results for each of the drinking water standards is included in the following sections.

3.2.1 Regulation 16(2)(a) *Escherichia coli* (*E. coli*)

Regulation 16(2)(a) requires all samples of drinking water to contain no *E. coli* (0 organisms per 100 millilitres of drinking water). The SDW Regulations require at least one sample is collected weekly.

All samples at Tidal River Campground and the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility were compliant for *E. coli* in the reporting period. A summary of results is included in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2 Results summary for *Escherichia coli*.

Water sampling area	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	*Maximum detected (orgs/100mL*)*	*Number of known or suspected e. coli contamination events (s.22/s.18)*
Tidal River	*Weekly*	*156***	*0*	*0*
Twelve Apostles	*Weekly*	*104****	*0*	*0*

** Escherichia coli organisms per 100mL*

*** Number of samples representative of treated water samples - treatment (52), water storage (52), rotating customer tap (52).*

**** Number of samples representative of treated water samples - water storage (52), rotating customer tap (52).*

3.2.2 Regulation 16(2)(b) chemical and physical health-based characteristics

3.2.2.1 Trihalomethanes (THM)

The SDW Regulations r.16(b) require total trihalomethanes to be less than or equal to 0.25mg/L of drinking water. The SDW Regulations r. 14(2)(b)(ii) require at least one sample is collected monthly.

All samples at Tidal River Campground and the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility were compliant for trihalomethanes in the reporting period. A summary of results is included in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3 Results summary for trihalomethanes.

Water sampling area	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	Drinking water quality standard (mg/L)	*Maximum detected (mg/L)*	*Average (mg/L)*	*Number of samples where standard was not met (s.18)*
Tidal River	*Monthly*	*12*	*0.25*	*0.170*	*0.124*	*0*
Twelve Apostles	*Monthly*	*12*	*0.25*	*0.019*	*0.014*	*0*

3.2.2.1 Other health-based chemical or physical characteristics

The SDW Regulation 16(2)(b) requires water suppliers to ensure drinking water supplied does not contain a chemical or physical characteristic specified in Table 10.6 of the Australian Drinking Water Guidelines, in that the amount of characteristic in the drinking water does not exceed the health guideline value.

All samples at Tidal River Campground were compliant for the reporting period. A summary of the characteristics monitored and the results is included in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4 Results summary for other chemical or physical characteristics monitoring.

Water sampling area	*Sample characteristic*	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	Drinking water quality standard (mg/L)	*Maximum detected (mg/L)*	*Average (mg/L)*	*Number of samples where standard was not met (s.18)*
Tidal River	*Chloroacetic acid*	*Quarterly*	*12**	0.15	*0.01*	*0.01*	*0*
Tidal River	*Dichloroacetic acid*	*Quarterly*	*12**	*0.10*	*0.03*	*0.02*	*0*
Tidal River	*Trichloroacetic acid*	*Quarterly*	*12**	*0.10*	*0.02*	*0.01*	*0*
Tidal River	*Antimony*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.003*	*<0.001*	*<0.001*	*0*
Tidal River	*Arsenic*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.01*	*<0.0005*	*<0.0005*	*0*
Tidal River	*Barium*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*2*	*0.015*	*0.013*	*0*
Tidal River	*Beryllium*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.06*	*<0.001*	*<0.001*	*0*
Tidal River	*Boron*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*4*	*0.028*	*0.025*	*0*
Tidal River	*Cadmium*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.002*	*<0.0001*	*<0.0001*	*0*
Tidal River	*Chromium*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.05*	*<0.0005*	*<0.0005*	*0*
Tidal River	*Copper*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*2*	*0.008*	*0.005*	*0*
Tidal River	*Lead*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.01*	*0.0005*	*0.0002*	*0*
Tidal River	*Manganese*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.5*	*0.003*	*0.002*	*0*
Tidal River	*Mercury*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.001*	*0.0001*	*0.00006*	*0*
Tidal River	*Molybdenum*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.05*	*<0.001*	*<0.001*	*0*
Tidal River	*Nickel*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.02*	*<0.0005*	*<0.0005*	*0*
Tidal River	*Selenium*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.01*	*<0.001*	*<0.001*	*0*
Tidal River	*Silver*	*Quarterly*	*6***	*0.1*	*<0.001*	*<0.001*	*0*

** While the sampling frequency for trichloroacetic acid is quarterly, samples were collected monthly therefore all sample results have been reported on.*
*** A total of six samples were collected and reported on for the quarterly metal scan collect at the Tidal River Campground customer tap sample points. This occurred because samples were collected monthly between November 2025 and February 2026. This resulted in the routine sample scheduled for May 2026 to be missed. Refer to section 3.4.1 Tidal River Campground – missed sample event.*

3.2.3 Regulation 16(2)(c) – other microbial, chemical or physical characteristics

The SDW Regulation 16(2)(c) requires water suppliers to ensure drinking water supplied that contains any microbial, chemical, or physical characteristic not referred to in r. 16(2)(a) or (b) that the amount of the characteristic is less than an amount that would pose a risk to human health whether that risk arises from the characteristic itself or in combination with other characteristics.

At Tidal River, samples for blue-green algae were also collected and analysed to assess source water risks. The results for the samples analysed demonstrated no risk posed.

3.2.4 Regulation 16(3) Turbidity

The SDW Regulations r.16(3) require the 95th percentile of turbidity results for samples in any 12-month period to be less than or equal to 5.0 Nephelometric Turbidity Units (NTU). The SDW Regulations 14(2)(b)((iv) require at least one sample is collected weekly.

All samples at Tidal River Campground and the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility were compliant for turbidity in the reporting period. A summary of results is included in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5 Results summary for turbidity.

Water sampling area	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	*Maximum turbidity in a sample (NTU*)*	*Maximum 95th percentile of turbidity results in a 12-month period (NTU)*	*Number of samples where standard was not met (s.18)*
Tidal River	*Weekly*	*104***	*4.9*	*0.5*	*0*
Twelve Apostles	*Weekly*	*104****	*0.4*	*0.2*	*0*

** Nephelometric Turbidity Units*

*** Number of samples representative of treated water samples – water storage (52), rotating customer tap (52).*

**** Number of samples representative of treated water samples – water storage (52), rotating customer tap (52).*

3.3 Compliance with r. 21(n) aesthetic characteristics

The SDW Regulations r. 21(n) requires a water supplier to summarise the steps taken to manage the aesthetic characteristics of the drinking water supplied. The steps taken by Parks Victoria to monitoring identified aesthetic sample characteristics and compare the results to the corresponding aesthetic limit in the ADWG and action/investigate where necessary. The results from the aesthetic characteristics monitored are presented below, along with any specific actions that may be used.

3.3.1 pH

The ADWG aesthetic range for pH in drinking water is 6.5 – 8.5. The SDW r.14(2)(b)(iii) require at least one water sample is collected monthly. Soda ash is used to manage the pH of the drinking water supply.

All samples at Tidal River Campground and Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility were compliant for pH during the reporting period. A summary of results is included in Table 3.6.

Table 3.6 Results summary for pH.

Water sampling area	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	*Minimum*	*Maximum*	*Aesthetic operating range*
Tidal River	*Weekly/Monthly*	*64**	*7.2*	*8.3*	*6.5 – 8.5*
Twelve Apostles	*Monthly*	*24***	*7.9*	*8.3*	*6.5 – 8.5*

** Number of samples representative of treated water samples - water storage (52), rotating customer tap (12).*

*** Number of samples representative of treated water samples- water storage (12), rotating customer tap (12).*

3.3.2 Colour

The ADWG aesthetic guideline limit for colour in drinking water is 15 Hazen units (HU). The pretreatment and filtration process is use to manage the colour of the drinking water supply, along with a distribution flushing program to maintain the cleanliness of the system.

Colour is monitored at Tidal River Campground only. All samples at Tidal River Campground were compliant for colour during the reporting period. A summary of results is included in Table 3.7.

Table 3.7 Results summary for colour.

Water sampling area	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	*Maximum (HU)*	*Average (HU)*	*Aesthetic operating range*
Tidal River	*Monthly*	*12*	*< 5**	*< 5**	*< 15*

** The minimum laboratory reporting value for colour is 5 Hazen.*

3.3.3 Aluminium (acid-soluble)

Aluminium (PAC23) is used at the Tidal River WTP as a coagulant to assist with improving the filtration process and is removed during the treatment process. The ADWG aesthetic limit for aluminium (acid-soluble) in drinking water is 0.2mg/L. Operational tasks are used to optimise pretreatment coagulation to ensure aluminium (acid-soluble) is managed in the drinking water supply.

Aluminium (acid-soluble) is monitored at Tidal River Campground only. All samples at Tidal River Campground were compliant for aluminium (acid-soluble) in the reporting period. A summary of results is included in Table 3.8.

Table 3.8 Results summary for aluminium (acid soluble).

Water sampling area	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	*Maximum (mg/L)*	*Average (mg/L)*	*Aesthetic operating range (mg/L)*
Tidal River	*Monthly*	*12*	*0.042*	*0.012*	*< 0.2*

3.3.4 Alkalinity

The ADWG aesthetic limit for alkalinity is 200 mg/L and is the sum of the carbonate, bicarbonate and hydroxide content.

Alkalinity is monitored at Tidal River Campground only. All samples at Tidal River Campground were compliant for alkalinity in the reporting period. A summary of results is included in Table 3.9.

Table 3.9 Results summary for alkalinity.

Water sampling area	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	*Maximum (mg/L)*	*Average (mg/L)*	*Aesthetic operating range (mg/L)*
Tidal River	*Monthly*	*12*	*46*	*37*	*< 200*

3.3.5 Iron and zinc

The ADWG aesthetic guideline limit for iron in drinking water is 0.3 mg/L and for zinc it is 3.0 mg/L.

Iron and zinc are monitored at Tidal River Campground only. All samples at Tidal River Campground were compliant for iron and zinc during the reporting period. A summary of results is included in Table 3.10.

Table 3.10 Results summary for colour.

Water sampling area	*Sample characteristics*	*Sampling frequency*	*Number of samples*	*Maximum (mg/L)*	*Average (mg/L)*	*Aesthetic operating range (mg/L)*
Tidal River	*Iron*	*Quarterly*	*6**	*0.015*	*0.007*	*< 0.3*
Tidal River	*Zinc*	*Quarterly*	*6**	*0.017*	*0.008*	*< 3.0*

** Iron and zinc are part of the quarterly metal scan of samples collect at the Tidal River Campground customer tap sample points. There are six samples reported as collected due to monthly sample collection between November 2025 and February 2026. This resulted in the routine sample scheduled for May 2026 to be missed. Refer to section 3.4.1 Tidal River Campground – missed sample event.*

3.4 Variations to the sampling frequency

The SDW Regulations r. 17 requires that samples of drinking water are collected from each location specified in the water sampling program and r. 19 requires that each sample of drinking water collected from each location is analysed by an accredited organisation.

3.4.1 Tidal River Campground – missed sample event

A missed sampling event occurred in May 2026 at Tidal River Campground, where the scheduled quarterly metal scan customer tap sample was not collected for analysis.

During the reporting period, samples were collected monthly between November 2025 and February 2026, resulting in a total of six sampling events rather than the four required for the reporting period which exceeded the required quarterly sample count of four. However, due to human error the quarterly requirement the scheduled for May 2026 sample was not collected. This event was identified in July 2026.

All of the results for water sample characteristics measure in the six samples collected during the reporting period were either reported as below the method detection limit (as less than result) or were well below the ADWG health guideline value. Therefore, the event was assessed as posing no risk to public health.

To prevent a recurrence, Parks Victoria will review samples collected against the sampling and monitoring schedule to confirm that scheduled events are tracked by their due date, rather than by total sample count, ensuring the program is completed in full and in accordance with the required frequency.

4 Analysis of water quality results

4.1 Water quality results 2025/26

Results for this reporting period have been compared to results from the previous two reporting periods, as required by the SDW Regulation r.21(j). A summary is included in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 shows full compliance with drinking water standards at both Tidal River Campground and the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility for the reporting period. The compliance is in accordance with the previous reporting period.

Table 4.1 Compliance comparison for sample characteristics for most three recent reporting periods.

Water sampling area *Tidal River*	*Sample characteristic*	*Percentage of samples compliant with the drinking water quality standard or ADWG aesthetic guideline value*		
		2023/24	*2024/25*	*2025/26*
Tidal River	*Escherichia coli*	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Turbidity	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Trihalomethanes (THM)	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Chloroacetic acid	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Dichloroacetic acid	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Trichloroacetic acid	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Metals	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100%*
	pH	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Colour	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Aluminium	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Alkalinity	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
Twelve Apostles	*Escherichia coli*	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Turbidity	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	Trihalomethanes (THM)	*100 %*	*100 %*	*100 %*
	pH	*100%*	*100%*	*100 %*

5 Water Quality Customer Complaints

Parks Victoria take customer complaints seriously. If a complaint is received regarding water quality, it is recorded and investigated with corrective action implemented as needed.

There were no water quality complaints received in the reporting period. This is consistent with the last two reporting periods as outlined in Table 5.1.

Table 5.1 Complaints comparison for three reporting periods.

Water sampling area	*Number of complaints*			*Comparison with previous reporting periods*	*Comments*
	Current reporting period	*2024/25*	*2023/24*		
Tidal River	*0*	*0*	*0*	*Zero complaints*	*Nil*
Twelve Apostles	*0*	*0*	*0*	*Zero complaints*	*Nil*

6 Emergency and Incident Management

There were no emergency or incidents that occurred at the Tidal River Campground or the Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility during the reporting period.

There were no Section 18 or Section 22 (SDW Act) notifications for the Tidal River Campground or Twelve Apostles Visitor Facility during the reporting period.

7 Risk Management Plan Audit

The SDW Act requires water suppliers to prepare, implement, review and revise risk management plans for the supply of drinking water and details the matters that must be contained in a risk management plan. Parks Victoria implement site-specific safe drinking water risk management plans at each of its drinking water localities. The plans consider risks across the whole water supply system, from catchment to tap, and have been developed to meet the requirements of the SDW Act.

At periods declared by DH, the risk management plan is required to be audited by an approved third-party auditor under the SDW Act. The audits of risk management plans are conducted to determine compliance with the legislative risk management plan requirements and are an opportunity to drive improvement.

The requirement for a risk management plan audit did not fall within this reporting period. The previous audit was conducted in 2023 and the four opportunities raised have been closed and reported on in previous annual reports.

8 Other Reporting Requirements

8.1 Undertakings

The SDW Regulation r.21(d) requires a water supplier to provide a summary of every written undertaking accepted by the Secretary under Section 30 of the SDW Act.

No undertakings were carried out or commenced during the reporting period.

8.2 Aesthetic standard variations

The SDW Regulation r.21(k) requires a water supplier to provide a summary of the aesthetic standard variations including the conditions imposed under Section 21 of the Act in relation to that variation.

No aesthetic standard variations were approved or in place during the reporting period.

8.3 Exemptions

The SDW Regulation r.21(l) requires a water supplier to provide a summary of any exemption from a water quality standard including the conditions imposed under Section 21 of the Act in relation to that exemption.

No exemptions from a water quality standard was approved or in place during the reporting period.

8.4 Regulated Water

Regulated water is “water that is not intended for drinking but could reasonably be mistaken as drinking water” that has been gazetted under s 6 of the SDW Act.

Parks Victoria does not supply regulated water pursuant to Section 6 of the SDW Act.

9 Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
ADWG Health limit	The concentration or measure of a water quality characteristic set by the ADWGs that, based on present knowledge, does not result in any significant risk to the health of the consumer over a lifetime of consumption.
ADWG Aesthetic limit	The concentration or measure of a water quality characteristic set by the ADWGs that is associated with the acceptability of water to the consumer, e.g. appearance, taste, and odour.
DH	Department of Health
Drinking water sample	A sample of water taken from a site whereby water has undergone treatment to meet drinking water sample standards. It includes samples taken post-treatment, through to storage and to consumer sample points/taps.
Laboratory	An external NATA accredited organisation used to analyse water quality samples in accordance with accepted methodologies and standards. Laboratories used by Parks Victoria are accredited under the National Association of Testing Authorities, Australia (NATA).
PAC 23	Polyaluminium chlorite. A liquid inorganic coagulant containing aluminium compounds that is used in the treatment of water.
Polymer	An additive to promote the formation of floc particles and hence the clarification of water.
Reporting period	The span of time covering the extent of a report. For this report, the reporting period is 1 July 2025 to 30 June 2026 and includes results from sample rounds and events that occurred within the time period.
Drinking water quality standard	The SDW Regulations r. 16 prescribes drinking water quality standards, which include the health-based and aesthetic drinking water quality standards.
SDW Act	Safe Drinking Water Act 2003
SDW Regulations	Safe Drinking Water Regulations 2025
Section 18 notification	Refers to a notification required if non-complying water is supplied or if the supplied water is unlikely to comply with a relevant drinking water quality standard. The drinking water quality standard refers to the standards specified under r.16 of the SDW Regulations. Notifications must be made in writing to the Department of Health within 10 days of detection.
Section 22 report	Refers to a report of known or suspected drinking water contamination. Notifications must be reported immediately to the Department of Health verbally and in writing when the: • water may be the cause of an illness • level of a drinking water quality standard is such that it may pose a risk to human health • water may cause widespread complaints.
Soda Ash	Sodium carbonate used for pH correction.
Sodium hypochlorite	Used in the chlorination/disinfection of drinking water.

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