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MEDIA RELEASE

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Isaac and Fraser Coast Councils Make a Splash in Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test

The annual Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test, sponsored by TracWater, took place at the Waters Edge Function Centre in Brisbane on Thursday, 22 August 2024 as part of the Queensland Water Directorate's (*qldwater*) 2024 Annual Forum. This prestigious competition aims to recognise excellence in water quality and taste amongst Queensland's water providers.

After a rigorous blind tasting by over 60 water industry representatives, joint winners, a first in the history of the competition, were announced - Isaac Regional Council's Glenden Scheme and Fraser Coast Regional Council's Hervey Bay Scheme. These two outstanding water sources were commended for their exceptional taste and quality. In addition, the runner up for this year's competition was Mackay Regional Council's Marian Water Treatment Plant.

Isaac Council's entry this year came from Glenden, a rural town of 475 people which is a major locality for a large coal mine. Drinking water for the community is sourced from the Gattonvale off-stream storage in the Bowen River Weir. SunWater (Glencore) manages the pipeline that runs from the Bowen River Weir through a 100 ML Newlands Coal Mine (Glencore) lagoon to the 6 ML Turkey's nest, located at the Glenden WTP. The plant has two operators that manually (no automation or SCADA) manage the water and wastewater operations in Glenden. It follows a standard treatment process of coagulation, flocculation, filtration and disinfection.

Fraser Coast's Burgowan Water Treatment plant sources water from Lake Lenthall on the Burrum River and takes it through a pre-treatment process of lime and carbon dioxide to produce a non-corrosive product water. The treatment includes clarification, ozonation to remove dissolved organic matter, taste compounds and any algal toxins, biological activated carbon filters to remove readily biodegradable bi-products and residual floc particles and finally disinfection and water pH correction with sodium hypochlorite and sodium hydroxide respectively.

The runner up - Mackay Regional Council's Marian Scheme - sample is sourced from the Pioneer River that originated in the tropical rainforests of the Eungella National Park and Crediton State Forest and is treated using clarification, filtration and chlorine disinfection processes before being distributed to households and businesses in the townships of Marian and Mirani.

Other entries included samples from Bundaberg, Cairns, Gladstone, Gympie, Livingstone, Palm Island, and Southern Downs councils as well as Seqwater.

The next stop for the winning entries is the National best tasting tap water competition in November in Tasmania, where they will compete against other top-performing water sources from across the country. The Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test celebrates excellence in water quality and reinforces the importance of maintaining and improving the delivery of clean and safe drinking water to communities.

Further information about the award recipients can be found at: <https://qldwater.com.au/qldwater-blog>

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About the Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test

qldwater started the Best of the Best Queensland Water Taste Test to promote the good work done by Water Service Providers in producing a great quality product to their communities 24/7. The competition aims to celebrate the achievements of the State's urban water service providers and to promote some healthy rivalry among our communities.

The **qldwater** state-wide taste test was established in 2012 and has since grown to become a coveted international competition with the Water Industry Operators Association (WIOA) introducing it in NSW, ACT, South Australia, Victoria, Tasmania and New Zealand. It also includes the annual Water of Origin, where the winning samples from Queensland and NSW battle it out at the WIOA QLD Conference each year. The winner from the Australian taste test goes on to compete in the International Taste Test event held in Berkeley Springs each year, with Toowoomba Regional Council representing Australia in 2018 and Mackay in 2020.

About *qldwater*

As the central advisory and advocacy body within Queensland's urban water industry, *qldwater* is a collaborative hub, working with its members to provide safe, secure and sustainable urban water services to Queensland communities. *qldwater* members are all registered urban water service providers in Queensland including local government service providers, local government-owned statutory authorities, and state government-owned corporations. *qldwater* also offers Affiliate Memberships to other industry partners, consultants and service providers located in and outside Queensland.