



The classification system (Refer to DWAF(1998))

- Water in the **Blue** and **Green** classes is safe for lifetime use.
- Water in the **Yellow** class is safe for use under certain condition, but should be used with caution:
 - It is most important to sample and assess the quality of water in the **Yellow** class regularly.
 - Expert advice should be called upon to determine the real threat to sensitive users.
 - Sensitive groups should be informed when water falls into the **Yellow** class.
- Water falling into the **Red** class should be considered unsafe for use and should be treated. Water in the **Red** class may be used for short-term emergency supply, but only where no alternative supplies are available.
- Water falling into the **Purple** class should be considered unsafe for use and should be treated. Water in the **Purple** class is unsafe even for short-term emergency use.

What are sensitive groups?

- Sensitive groups include people who may have particular medical conditions which make them more susceptible to poor water quality. Babies, young children and the elderly may also be more sensitive to some substances.
- People differ widely in their responses to water quality. What is safe for one person is not necessarily safe for another. Even in the **Blue** (ideal) class, there may be a few individuals who show some negative response. Where a few individuals may experience negative effects, these individuals have been identified as “sensitive groups”.
- Babies are generally more susceptible to poor water quality and are identified as sensitive for most substances. But it is important to note that not all babies will show negative effects and that normal, healthy babies will not necessarily be affected.

Reference:

DWAF (1998). Quality of domestic water supplies. Volume 1. Assessment Guide. WRC No. TT 101/98, p.23.

