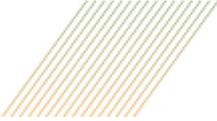




EPA Monitor

your update on EPA news and information



14 December 2010

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Changes to fees

The 2010-2011 State Budget included a number of changes to fees and charges that the EPA administers. These include an increase to the solid waste levy and a restructuring of the environment protection licence application fees.

Solid Waste Levy

The solid waste levy is applied to all waste disposed to landfill and supports waste diversion from landfill into reuse and recycling programs. In the 2010-2011 Budget it was announced that from July 2011 the solid waste levy will increase to \$35 a tonne in metropolitan Adelaide (from \$26) and \$17.50 in non-metropolitan Adelaide (from \$13). Increasing the waste levy will continue to drive behaviour change through a stronger economic incentive to divert waste from landfill.

The revenue collected from the levy will continue to fund a diverse range of programs including incentives to councils to improve kerbside recycling with a focus on food waste, market development for recycled products, infrastructure grants in both the metropolitan area and rural areas for transfer stations and recycling infrastructure, resource recovery/eco-efficiency services to industry, illegal dumping investigations and a range of other programs and activities.

In conjunction with the increase to the levy, the Government has sought a review of the structure of the levy, which will be commissioned by Zero Waste SA. This review will respond to suggestions from the waste industry and assess potential options for the levy structure in order to ensure the Government's goal to reduce waste to landfill is best achieved. The review will consult the key sectors including local government, landfill operators and recyclers.

The Government also recognises concerns that increasing the levy could exacerbate the risk of illegal dumping and is committed to managing this risk. The draft *South Australia's Waste Strategy 2010-2015* sets a target for reduction in incidence and tonnages of waste being dumped illegally. This target will be pursued through a number of actions including education, enforcement action and disincentives for dumping. In addition, best practice measures being used interstate to manage illegal dumping are being researched to determine their applicability in SA, particularly in light of further increases to the levy.

Licence Fees

The Budget included a model for the cost recovery of environment protection licence applications fees. A tiered fee structure is proposed, to be introduced from July 2012, that reflects the complexity of licence applications. Less complex, straightforward licence applications will be charged the lowest application fee to reflect the administrative nature of the service provided by the EPA, in comparison to more complex technical and large scale licence applications which will incur a higher fee to reflect the technical expertise from across the agency that needs to be dedicated to the assessment process. This new model seeks to apply fees in an equitable manner and remove cross subsidisation. Further information will be provided to licensees as the adjusted fee model is developed.

For further information regarding the proposed changes to fees, please contact Fiona Harvey on 08 8204 2055 or fiona.harvey@epa.sa.gov.au.

Container deposit scheme cost recovery fees

The Budget included an announcement that from July 2011, cost recovery fees will be introduced for the container deposit scheme. The fees will be applied to recover the costs of administering the scheme to ensure that there is a focus on compliance with the legislation and a level playing field for all participants within the scheme. A number of options are being developed to set the structure and application of fees which includes the potential for annual fees to be placed on approved super collectors and collection depots as well as a specific cost recovery fee based on containers returned through the system. The EPA is committed to seeking feedback on these options from key stakeholders and has begun consultation with supercollectors in the first instance. Broader consultation with collection depots and beverage manufacturers is planned over the next month.

Results of licence fee review

We would like to thank all those who gave their time and experience to respond to our survey on our licence fee system (LFS). We received 400 submissions from a range of stakeholders including licensees, industry associations and consultants. Both small and large licensees were represented from a wide range of sectors. The review focussed on identifying areas of inconsistency with the system.

The results show that more than half the respondents understood the LFS and understood how to calculate fees. In addition, notwithstanding a higher response rate from licensees who experienced an increase in fees (>70%), more respondents indicated that the system was fair/very fair (33%) than indicated that it was not fair/not at all fair (22%), with the remainder indicating neutral/don't know.

The review raised a number of issues which the EPA is now addressing: issues which focus on clarifying the LFS or amending the LFS to account for situations not covered when the LFS was developed, such as setting a fee for sites that are not operating, but wish to retain their licence. Other issues which will provide useful input into subsequent broader review of the LFS, such as potentially aligning the fee thresholds with the thresholds for requiring an EPA authorisation.

The full findings of the review are available in the report: Review of the EPA's licence fee system www.epa.sa.gov.au/xstd_files/Licensing/Report/lfs_review.pdf

For more information, please contact Anne Ellson on anne.ellson@epa.sa.gov.au

Significant fine for chemical spill

United Water has been convicted and fined \$80,000 in the Environment, Resources and Development Court after chemicals spilled from its Barossa water treatment plant at Williamstown.

Approximately 40,000 litres of aluminium sulfate solution leaked into Yettie Creek, killing small animals and plant life. United Water pleaded guilty to causing material environmental harm. The spill, which occurred in February 2007, was caused by a ruptured pipe that leaked onto a floor and via the plant drainage system into the creek.

OneSteel receives EPA Sustainability Licence

EPA Presiding Member Cheryl Bart AO and Minister for Environment and Conservation, Hon. Paul Caica have presented OneSteel with South Australia's third EPA Sustainability Licence.

OneSteel received the new licence for showing a high level of commitment to working with the community and continuing to reduce its impact on the environment over several years.

The Sustainability Licence commits OneSteel to continually improving its environmental performance as well as working with the community.

Initial targets OneSteel aims to achieve under its Sustainability Licence, include:

- reducing reliance on the River Murray
- improving energy and carbon efficiency
- reducing waste generation and improving product yield
- improving environmental awareness amongst staff
- maintaining social and ethical responsibility by promoting values and initiatives that actively engage the community of Whyalla.

For further information or a copy of OneSteel's Sustainability Licence visit the EPA website at www.epa.sa.gov.au

Houseboat audits on blackwater

The EPA has carried out a random audit of blackwater containment systems on board private vessels in the Mannum region, with a record number of houseboats inspected. In total 120 houseboats were audited, of which 57 were compliant – a record compliance level that reflects the EPA's effort to work closely with the houseboat industry in raising awareness of the EPA houseboat requirements.

The EPA has identified an increasing number of abandoned vessels on the River Murray and will continue to use enforcement mechanisms under the *Environment Protection Act 1993* to have these vessels removed if they are deemed to be polluting the waterway.

The houseboat audits provided an excellent opportunity to promote awareness and educate boat users and the general public about the new greywater management requirements.

For further information please visit www.epa.sa.gov.au or contact the EPA on (08) 8204 2004.

New web info on greywater treatment for vessels

The EPA has developed a new section on its website for vessel and facility management. These web pages provide easy access to information regarding the regulations and environmental management practices contained within the *Code of practice for vessel and facility management (marine and inland waters)*, notably those for greywater.

As the first jurisdiction in the world to introduce the option of on-board greywater treatment, South Australia and the EPA have led the way in the development of world-first greywater treatment technology for river vessels, and other Australian states are now following suit. Recently, the team has had discussions with both Victoria and New South Wales about the uptake of SA's greywater regulations.

Locally, greywater treatment systems are being installed on boats operating on the River Murray, and the EPA expects approximately one quarter of commercial boats will have systems installed by 31 December 2010.

The new vessel and facility web pages can be viewed at www.epa.sa.gov.au/vfm or for more information phone (08) 8204 2004.

Reminder to building industry on stormwater pollution

The EPA is reminding workers in the building industry of their responsibility to prevent waste from entering the stormwater system.

In particular, the EPA has recently investigated slurry and wastewater from concrete mixing trucks being incorrectly disposed of in drains. These types of waste products should be disposed of:

- via contained wash out areas on site
- at the depot that supplied the concrete
- at the depot where the concrete business is operated from.

The *Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003* requires that workers undertake activities in a way that ensures stormwater is protected from pollutants such as concrete waste, sediment and chemical residues.

Expiation fines of \$300 can be issued to building industry companies or employees who are caught discharging or depositing materials, including building construction waste into the stormwater system or onto land where it is likely to enter stormwater.

The EPA website (www.epa.sa.gov.au) has various information sheets and codes of practice documents to assist the building industry comply with the *Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003*. Anyone wanting further information on stormwater pollution can call (08) 8204 2004.

News from the EPA Board

At the October meeting, a progress report on regulatory challenges of the Code of Practice for Managed Aquifer Recharge was discussed; as was the draft Guideline for assessment of noise impacts from new rail operations. During this discussion, the Board identified the issue of the EPA's role in Transport Orientated Developments, the impact of rail noise and the EPA's interface with the development system more generally. The Board also noted the EPA's 2010-11 Corporate Plan and set up a small working group to develop an illegal dumping strategy.

At the November meeting, the Board endorsed the EPA's contribution to Nyrstar's revised approach beyond the 'Tenby10 initiative, 'Ten for them'. Tenby10 aimed to identify and implement strategies for primary and secondary sources of lead to reduce children's blood lead levels such that 95 percent of children in the age range 0-4 have lead levels below 10 µg/dL of blood by the end of 2010. Post 2010, the EPA will no longer be a formal program partner but will continue in its role as a strong regulator.

The Board also discussed the Draft Adelaide Coastal Water Quality Improvement Plan and a paper regarding the strategic challenges of air quality. The Board approved the draft Stakeholder Engagement Statement and endorsed the recommendations of its Site Contamination Auditor Accreditation Committee regarding site contamination auditor accreditation. The Board also endorsed the draft outline and timelines for the 2013 State of the Environment Report for consultation with other agencies.

Best Wishes for the Festive Season

