

EPA Monitor

your update on EPA
news and information



May 2009

Welcome to the first edition of the EPA Monitor. While the EPA monitors the environment, we hope this newsletter allows you to monitor what's happening in the EPA.

This newsletter replaces CE News and will be emailed to you every three months to provide you with information on EPA events and activities.

Over the past 12 months the EPA has experienced some significant organisational changes. I became the EPA's Chief Executive in September 2008, at the point at which the Chair and Chief Executive role were separated and Cheryl Bart took up the role as Presiding Member of the Board. We also have recently relocated our head office, radiation branch and Stirling branch to levels 8 and 9 of the new six star-rated SA Water Building in Victoria Square.

Over these first eight months at the EPA, I've been really impressed by the EPA staff; by the rigour of the scientific evidence, by their commitment to working with licensees to help solve environmental problems, the sharing of advice and good practice across industries, and the importance they place on consistency and a level playing field.

I'm very keen to ensure that the EPA is good at listening and I sincerely welcome any feedback on this newsletter and any experiences you have with the EPA.

Helen Fulcher
Chief Executive

Stakeholder survey results

In 2008 the University of South Australia's Ehrenberg-Bass Institute of Marketing Science conducted stakeholder research for the EPA focussing on how EPA services are perceived by three key stakeholder groups: licensed businesses, enquiry and environmental complaints line callers, and radiation licensees.

The findings of the survey were that the majority of stakeholders perceived the EPA's services and advice to be honest, fair and transparent and that the service most valued was advice. The findings also identified areas within the EPA where there is room for improvement, in particular less complex documents, written in plainer English.

The EPA has taken on board the feedback received and is working to build on these positive results to further improve services provided to stakeholders. In particular we are investing in a more functional website by mid June.

Electronic Licensing Forms

You can apply, renew or pay for an EPA authorisation on line via e-ELF.

e-ELF is your single access point for all EPA licences, exemptions and authorisations and allows you to pay an invoice on-line with a credit card, visit www.elf.sa.gov.au

New Business Sustainability website

The new Business Sustainability website provides information and services to support businesses achieve long-term profitability and growth, using fewer resources.

The Business Sustainability Alliance is the initiative of four SA Government agencies including the Department of Trade and Economic Development, Zero Waste SA, SA Water and the EPA.

To access the website, please visit www.centreforinnovation.org.au

EPA Board

Over the past year, we have welcomed new Board members Cheryl Bart and Jane Yuile and have farewelled Greg Panigas and Yvonne Sneddon who have finished their terms of appointment with the EPA Board.

To view the profiles of current EPA Board members, please visit www.epa.sa.gov.au/board.html#bart

New Waste to Resources Policy

The new Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy will encourage the avoidance, reduction and reuse of waste in South Australia and support South Australia's Strategic Plan by attaining sustainability and reaching the target of a 25% reduction in waste to landfill by 2014.

The Policy is currently in a draft format and was released for public consultation in November 2008. The consultation period closed in February 2009 and the EPA received 60 submissions from various stakeholders. A vast majority of submissions were supportive of the intent and objectives of the draft EPP.

The EPA will now report to the Minister for Environment and Conservation on the draft EPP and outcomes of the consultation.

Ban on plastic bags

In November last year, Parliament passed the Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008. The Act to ban plastic shopping style bags in retail stores came into effect on 4 May 2009.

The EPA is responsible for ensuring compliance with the plastic bag legislation and is working closely with Zero Waste SA to ensure a common approach is maintained to plastic bag compliance issues.

For more information, visit www.byobags.com.au



Greywater treatment

The EPA has completed a Code of Practice for Vessel and Facility Management: Marine and Inland Waters to encourage best practice environmental management for marinas, vessel service facilities and vessel operators.

The code specifically introduces greywater management requirements for all vessels operating on South Australian inland waters. Options for the management of greywater are dependent on the type of vessels and include containment, treatment or establishment of behavioural change.

These options will come into effect through a staged approach over the next three years, with all vessels required to comply with the code by 1 January 2011.

Once implemented, South Australia will be the first State in the world to have introduced the option of on-board greywater treatment for all vessels operating on inland waters.



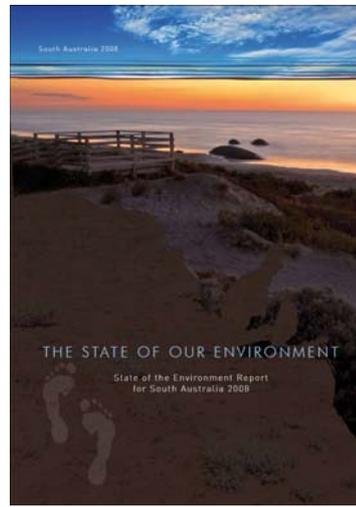
Left: Deb Parsons (Waterways Houseboats), Digby McLeay (Newtreat), Peter Scott (EPA), Colin Newton (Inventor), Glen Jones (BIASA), Ryan Parsons (Waterways Houseboats) inspecting a greywater treatment system.

SOE report

In November 2008, the fifth State of the Environment report was released by the EPA Presiding Member Cheryl Bart.

There are 41 recommendations with nine identified as priorities. These include:

- doubling the capture and re-use of wastewater and stormwater by 2012
- using a combination of water allocation planning, pricing, incentives and water rights to ensure sustainable water use by 2012
- developing adaption strategies to deal with climate change effects
- including environmental representation in strategic direction making to ensure consideration of interaction between economic, social and environmental objectives.



The report and its findings can be viewed at www.epa.sa.gov.au/soe.html

Strategic directions

The EPA has begun reviewing its Strategic Plan 2007-2010, to ensure that the focus of our activities over the next 18 months meets the needs of our stakeholders and the environment.

We're particularly taking on board feedback we've received from stakeholders, through market research conducted last year, our ongoing Board consultation meetings, and through the many meetings and conversations I've had with industry leaders over the past six months.

Broadly, we expect that we'll have a strong focus on working with industry, and on our ability to assist interested licensees in becoming more sustainable. We also want to improve our engagement with local government and ensure our work with the waste management industry leads to a level playing field.

New Solarium Laws

Regulations are now in force in South Australia requiring operators of cosmetic tanning units to be licensed.

The maximum penalty for operating a cosmetic tanning unit without a licence is \$10,000 and there are higher penalties of \$50,000 or five years imprisonment for allowing people under the age of 18 or fair skinned people to use solariums.

For more information on the new regulations visit www.epa.sa.gov.au/tanning.html

New radiation independent auditors

The number of medical and dental X-ray machines being installed has increased significantly over the past two years. The EPA tests these machines before registering them under the Radiation Protection and Control Act 1982.

As a result of the increased volume, and in line with National Competition Policy recommendations, the EPA is finalising protocols for new independent auditors who will be authorised to undertake compliance tests on low-dose X-ray machines to determine whether the machines meet requirements for registration under the Act.

The new independent auditing system will allow the EPA to focus on the higher dose and higher risk medical X-ray machines and expert advice to operators in general.

It is anticipated that the new system for low-dose medical and dental X-ray machines will be introduced by 2010.

New site contamination legislation

The third and final phase of the Environment Protection (Site Contamination) Amendment Act 2007 is scheduled to commence by 1 July 2009.

The new legislation makes clear the requirements for managing site contamination, including the ability to order an appropriate person to assess or remediate any site contamination that is present. This will ensure that any risks to human or environmental health are minimised. Penalties for not complying with an order involve fines of up to \$120,000.

For more information on the new site contamination legislation, please visit www.epa.sa.gov.au/contamination.html

Move

In March the EPA head office, EPA Radiation Protection Branch and EPA Stirling Watershed Office relocated to VS1 (250 Victoria Square, Adelaide).

The new building has received a six-star energy rating and has been designed to minimise waste, and the use of energy and water.

Telephone details for the EPA head office will remain the same however the Radiation Protection Branch and the Stirling Office can now be contacted on:

Telephone: (08) 8204 2004
1800 623 445 (country callers only)

Fax: (08) 8204 2020

Email: epainfo@epa.sa.gov.au



Above: New VS1 building in Victoria Square

Storage, management and disposal of copper chromated arsenate (CCA) posts

The EPA is able to provide industry and local councils with advice on the storage, management and disposal options of copper chromated arsenate (CCA) posts.

There is currently a guideline on the EPA website which addresses the storage and management options for CCA posts. Recently, the EPA granted Transpacific Industries Group approval to safely dispose of CCA posts at their Inkerman landfill.

The guideline is currently available on the EPA website at www.epa.sa.gov.au/pdfs/guide_cca.pdf. For more information on the disposal of CCA posts, please contact the EPA on (08) 8204 2004.

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