

## How to calculate licence fees for sewage treatment works and septic tank effluent disposal schemes

Updated December 2010<sup>1</sup>

*EPA 761/10: This document explains how to calculate fees<sup>2</sup> for sewage treatment works and septic tank effluent disposal schemes under the new fee structure.*

### Sewage treatment works and STEDs—activity 3(2)

Sewage treatment works and septic tank effluent disposal schemes (STEDs) are listed as activity 3(2) of Schedule 1 of the *Environment Protection Act 1993*. To calculate the fee for these activities, you need to know the amount of wastewater that is produced per year and the receiving environment for the discharged wastewater. This data should be collected throughout the year by the sewage treatment plant operator or, in some cases, can be estimated.

The licence fee comprises three components:

#### 1 Flat minimum fee component

The flat minimum fee of \$54 is applied to all licences and covers the minimum administration common to all licences.

#### 2 Environment management fee component

Environment management fees for sewage treatment works and STEDs are calculated based on the volume of wastewater produced. The fee levels range from 3 to 80 fee units. The EPA differentiates between the following types of sewage treatment works and STEDs for environment management fee calculation purposes:

- sewage treatment works or STEDs that discharge wastewater to the marine environment
- sewage treatment works or STEDs that discharge wastewater to land or inland waters within the Mount Lofty Ranges Water Protection Area
- sewage treatment works or STEDs that discharge wastewater to areas other than the Mount Lofty Ranges Water Protection Area or the marine environment.

Sewage treatment works or STEDS can move down an environment management fee level if all discharged wastewater is sustainably irrigated to land, disposed to an evaporation lagoon and / or discharged to another licensed sewage treatments works or STEDs or other sustainable re-use that is acceptable to the EPA. The levels are 80, 50, 20, 12, 8, 4, 3, 2 or 1 fee unit(s). Information to determine which fee level applies to a particular sewage treatment works or STEDS and the value of the fee units is available at [www.epa.sa.gov.au/licensees/licence\\_fee\\_system](http://www.epa.sa.gov.au/licensees/licence_fee_system).

<sup>1</sup> First issued November 2007

<sup>2</sup> All fees apply from 1 July 2010 to 30 June 2011

### 3 Resource efficiency fee component

Resource efficiency fees are calculated for sewage treatment works and STEDs based on:

- the amount of selected pollutants emitted above the set threshold
- the zone in which the sewage treatment works or STEDs is located
- the volume of low salinity wastewater discharged from the sewage treatment works or STEDs to the marine environment.

To determine whether resource efficiency fees will apply for any or all of these components, the fee schedules guideline provides pollutant thresholds and fee units for each component.

Resource efficiency fees will not apply for wastewater discharged from sewage treatment works or STEDs if all wastewater is irrigated sustainably to land, all disposed of to an evaporation lagoon or discharged to another licensed sewage treatment works or STEDs or other sustainable reuse that is acceptable to the EPA.

#### **Example 1 Sewage treatment works discharging wastewater to land as sustainable irrigation outside of the Mount Lofty Ranges Water Protection Area**

For this example we will take a sewage treatment works that discharges around 300 megalitres of wastewater per year to land as sustainable irrigation outside the Mount Lofty Ranges Water Protection Area.

In this case, a discount in the environment management fee component would apply in recognition of sustainable irrigation practices.

Resource efficiency fees would not apply due to the wastewater discharge going to land as sustainable irrigation.

The licence fee would be approximately \$4,606 as shown below.

Fee component	Fee unit	Fee unit value	Fee
Flat minimum fee	-	-	\$54
Environment management fee –activity 3(2)(b) outside Mount Lofty Ranges Water Protection Area	8 One level lower than set fee level (12) due to sustainable irrigation practices	\$569	\$4,554
Resource efficiency fees (made up of pollutant load based fees and a water reuse fee)	-	-	-
<b>Total licence fee</b>			<b>\$4,606</b>

## Example 2 STEDS discharging to inland waters within the Mount Lofty Ranges Water Protection Area

In this example, we will take a STEDs that is discharging less than 20 megalitres of wastewater per year to inland waters within the Mount Lofty Ranges Water Protection Area.

In this case, the thresholds for calculating pollutant load based fees are unlikely to be exceeded, and we assume that pollutant load based fees do not apply. The water reuse fee does not apply due to the discharge going to inland waters.

The fee would be approximately \$2,330 as shown below.

Fee component	Fee unit	Fee unit value	Fee
Flat minimum fee	-	-	\$54
Environment management fee –activity 3(2)(b) within Mount Lofty Ranges Water Protection Area	4	\$569	\$2,276
Resource efficiency fees (made up of pollutant load based fees and a water reuse fee).	-	-	-
<b>Total licence fee</b>			<b>\$2,330</b>

## Example 3 Sewage treatment works discharging to marine waters off Adelaide Metropolitan Coast

For this example, we will take a sewage treatment works that **discharges around 2,000 megalitres of wastewater per year to the Adelaide metropolitan coastal marine environment.**

In this case, the pollutant loads discharged would probably exceed the thresholds set for calculating pollutant load based fees. This would apply to suspended solids, phosphorus, nitrogen and organic matter. The thresholds for copper, zinc and lead may not be exceeded. We will assume pollutant discharges as shown in the following table, which all exceed pollutant threshold levels.

Zone weightings will also apply to nitrogen and suspended solids as the discharge is to the Adelaide metropolitan coastal marine environment.

A water reuse fee would probably apply as the average annual salinity of the discharge to the marine environment is likely to be less than 1,500 mg/l and the volume of discharge is greater than 10 megalitres.

The fee would be approximately \$76,402 as shown below.

Fee component			Fee unit	Fee unit value	Zone weighting	Fee
Flat minimum fee			-	-	-	\$54
Environment management fee –activity 3(2)(a)			80	\$569	-	\$45,520
Resource efficiency fees	Pollutant load discharged	Threshold tonne/yr				
Nitrogen	12 tonnes/yr	1	10	\$5.3	3	\$1,9080
Phosphorus	16 tonnes/yr	1	10	\$5.3	1	\$848
Suspended solids	10 tonnes/yr	1	10	\$5.3	2	\$1,060
Organic matter	4 tonnes/yr	1	10	\$5.3	1	\$200
Water reuse component –volume discharged	2,000 megalitres		1	\$13.40	-	\$26,800
<b>Total licence fee</b>						<b>\$76,402</b>

## Disclaimer

This publication is a guide only and does not necessarily provide adequate information in relation to every situation. This publication seeks to explain your possible obligations in a helpful and accessible way. In doing so, however, some detail may not be captured. It is important, therefore, that you seek information from the EPA itself regarding your possible obligations and, where appropriate, that you seek your own legal advice.

## Further information

### Legislation

Legislation may be viewed on <[www.legislation.sa.gov.au](http://www.legislation.sa.gov.au)>

Copies of legislation are available for purchase from:

Service SA Government Legislation Outlet  
Adelaide Service SA Centre  
108 North Terrace  
Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: 13 23 24  
Fax: (08) 8204 1909  
Website: <[www.shop.service.sa.gov.au](http://www.shop.service.sa.gov.au)>

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