

March 2004

Welcome to the second edition of "Working with Wastewater."

As mentioned in the December issue, we welcome input from our readers. Thanks to those who contributed to this edition. We look forward to hearing from you in future. If you would like to contribute to the newsletter, make a suggestion or request more information, please contact the editor at the email address below.

You can now find "Working with Wastewater" on our website at www.dhs.sa.gov.au/pehs ~ select "Environmental Health" then "Wastewater Management".

New on our web site are links to the presentations from our October 2003 seminar.



Wastewater Seminar field trip at the Murray Bridge WWTP.



Richard Atkinson discussing soil types during the WW seminar field trip.

Staff Changes

As most of you would know by now, late last year, Tony Farror of the Wastewater Management Section was assigned temporarily to the EPA to deal with wastewater issues from the EPA perspective. It seems he is as busy

over there as he was here with us. We have to have him back soon before he acclimatizes to the EPA. Meanwhile, we welcome two engineers that have joined the section temporarily, Graham Copley and Ruben Santos.



Tony presenting at the WWM Seminar

Installation approvals update

Greywater system installations

Twenty-eight councils responded to our request for information on installation approvals within their council areas of recently approved greywater devices (and any other similar systems that may be approved under the Waste Control Regulations to be marketed and/or installed in SA).

The councils that were authorised for greywater installation approvals by the DHS CEO on behalf of the Minister for Health are the following:

- ▶ Adelaide City Council
- ▶ Barossa Council
- ▶ District Council of Barunga West
- ▶ Berri Barmera Council
- ▶ City of Burnside
- ▶ City of Campbelltown
- ▶ City of Charles Sturt
- ▶ Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council
- ▶ District Council of Cleve
- ▶ The Coorong District Council
- ▶ District Council of Elliston
- ▶ District Council of Franklin Harbour
- ▶ Town of Gawler
- ▶ Kangaroo Island Council
- ▶ District Council of Kimba
- ▶ District Council of Le Hunte

WORKING WITH WASTEWATER

- ▶ District Council of Mallala
- ▶ City of Norwood, Payneham & St Peters
- ▶ City of Port Adelaide Enfield
- ▶ City of Port Augusta
- ▶ City of Prospect
- ▶ The Rural City of Murray Bridge
- ▶ City of Tea Tree Gully
- ▶ Wakefield Regional Council
- ▶ The Corporation of the Town of Walkerville
- ▶ City of West Torrens
- ▶ City of Whyalla
- ▶ District Council of Yorke Peninsula

We will soon send each authorised council their authorisation letters, the approval conditions for the recently approved greywater diversion device called "Greywater Saver" including further information and a copy of the manufacturers' installation and operation manuals.

New Products

The following new products have received approval:

- ▶ Aqua cycle Model c3000, c4000 AWWTS (renewal)
- ▶ Biocycle Model 15 AWWTS 15EP

The following products have received approval but are awaiting a final inspection of their prototype:

- ▶ Biolytix BFG Wastewater treatment system 10EP
- ▶ Greywater diversion device with subsurface disposal
- ▶ Aquaclarus wet composting toilet

A Paper on STEDS issues

David Cowell - District Council of Yorke Peninsula.

David Cowell will be presenting an interesting paper titled: *STEDS & Sewer sustainability – a proactive approach to partnerships to establish Council infrastructure & encourage housing developments* at the AIEH conference on the 3rd of March in Renmark.

The presentation will identify the amount, locations and type of systems within the District Council of Yorke Peninsula, the environmental

benefits and the amount of treated wastewater concentrating on coastal areas.

David will also discuss the Coast & Clean Seas funding advantages in putting up the initial headworks, the current LGA recommendations with pricing policies for sustainable systems and the requirements to meet the LGA, DHS, & EPA conditions. As we understand David will also explain where to start with the coordination of new schemes, establishing partnerships and determining contributions for infrastructure.

Impacts of the EPA Water Quality Policy on Onsite Systems

Bryce Routley – EPA.

Bryce Routley is a Stormwater officer with the EPA. He recently presented an interesting paper titled: *Septic tanks & other waste control systems – the role of the Environment Protection Policy – Water Quality (EPP-WQ)* at a Special Interest Group meeting for onsite systems. The salient points of this presentation are as follows:

How does EPP-WQ fit into EHO work?

The EPP-WQ is an extra tool for regulators. The Environmental Health Regulations are still the primary tools for septic tank failures and Councils are still the primary authorising agency for approval of new wastewater systems; inspection of existing wastewater systems and follow-up of complaints regarding WCS.

How can the EP-WQ be used for WCS issues?

General obligation to avoid discharge etc. into waters (see page 11 of explanatory report)

11. (1) A person who is undertaking an activity, or is an occupier of land, **must take all reasonable and practicable measures** (not being measures that themselves cause environmental harm) to avoid the discharge or deposit of waste from that activity or land —

(a) into any waters; **or**

(b) onto land in a place from which it is reasonably likely to enter any waters (including by processes such as seepage or infiltration or carriage by wind, rain, sea spray, or stormwater or by the rising of the water table).

Note: No fines attached

WORKING WITH WASTEWATER

How can the EPP-WQ be used for WCS issues? (continued)

Obligation not to cause certain environmental harm

12. A person must not, by discharging or depositing a pollutant into any waters, cause any of the following:

(e) an increase in algal or aquatic plant growth;
or

(g) the water to become harmful or offensive to humans, livestock or native animals.

Mandatory provision: Category B offence (\$300)

Obligation not to discharge or deposit listed pollutants into waters or onto certain land (Schedule 4)

17. (1) A person must not discharge or deposit a pollutant listed in Part 1 of Schedule 4 —

(a) into any waters; **or**

(b) onto land in a place from which it is reasonably likely to enter any waters (including by processes such as seepage or infiltration or carriage by wind, rain, sea spray or stormwater **or** by the rising of the water table).

Mandatory provision: Category B offence.(\$300)

NOTE: Schedule 4 includes Sewage

Septic systems

32. (1) A person who owns or occupies premises at which a septic system is installed must ensure that waste from the septic system is not discharged —

(a) into any waters; **or**

(b) onto land in a place from which it is reasonably likely to enter any waters (including by processes such as seepage or infiltration or carriage by wind, rain, sea spray or stormwater **or** by the rising of the water table).

Mandatory provision: Category B offence.

Other wastewater issues relating to the EPP-WQSeptic tank effluent disposal schemes

33. (2) An operator of a septic tank effluent disposal scheme must ensure that waste from septic systems collected or stored by the operator is not discharged —

(a) into any waters; **or**

(b) onto land in a place from which it is reasonably likely to enter any waters (including by processes such as seepage or infiltration or carriage by wind, rain, sea spray or stormwater or by the rising of the water table).

Mandatory provision: Category B offence.

STEDs seminar

A seminar (organised by the LGA) is being held on 18 March 2004 at the Alchemy Room, Adelaide Entertainment Centre for those involved in the operation of STEDs. For details click the following link:

http://www.lga.sa.gov.au/site/page.cfm?content_id=1909

Contact us

For any further information regarding newsletter content or if you wish to contribute, raise other issues, provide feedback etc please ring us or contact us at an email address below.

WORKING WITH WASTEWATER

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