



# Community Committee Presentation

## Roles and Responsibilities of the EPA

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# Environment Protection Authority

Administers the *Environment Protection Act 1993*.

- Environmental Authorisations (Licences)
- Environment protection legislation
  - Environment Protection Policies
  - Codes of Practice
  - Guidelines
- **Section 25** - General Environmental Duty
  - reasonable and practicable measures to prevent or minimise environmental harm.

# Environment Protection Act 1993

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## Environmental Authorisations (EPA licence)

- Activities of Environmental Significance listed in Schedule 1
- A person must not undertake a prescribed activity of Environmental Significance except as authorised by an environmental authorisation in the form of a licence.

# Managed Aquifer Recharge - Wastewater

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Licensed under 8(7) - Discharges to Marine or Inland Waters

- Operations involving discharges into inland waters where the discharges —
  - contain chemical water treatments; and
  - the total volume of the discharges exceeds 50 kilolitres per day.

# Approval Process

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- Typically – Development Approval required
  - EPA referred under Development Act (advice/direction)
  - EPA Licence granted
  
- Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR)
  - Development Approval not triggered
  - EPA Works Approval – permission to build the system

# Works Approvals

## Application process – Wastewater MAR

- Risk Management, Monitoring and Modelling documentation
  - Demonstrate that the MAR scheme will not cause unreasonable impacts on existing users, third parties and the environment.
- National Guidance documents:
  - Australian Guidelines For Water Recycling: Managing Health and Environmental Risks (Phase 2) Managed Aquifer Recharge
  - ANZECC Guidelines

# Works Approvals

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- Assessed by EPA and by DEWNR, advice sought from Health Department and from NRM.
- Public Notification
  - by letter to adjoining residents
  - advertisement in the paper
  - minimum two week opportunity to provide comment
- If approved the proponent is able to commence construction and EPA is obliged to provide a licence

# Approvals - Licencing

- EPA Licence – licence to operate the scheme
- Similar application to Works Approval
- Conditions applied to a licence to protect the environment and third parties
  - Risk Management and Monitoring Plans (based on the Australian Guidelines)
  - Managing risks from the water source, hydrogeology, operations
  - Injection pressures management
  - Set monitoring – continuous online and grab samples
  - Injection Criteria – aligned with the Water Quality Policy 2015
  - Exceedances Register and actions
  - Annual report – exceedances and improvements
    - Referred to DEWNR for comment



# Water Quality Policy 2015

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- The Policy defines Harm to Waters
- Outlines how Harm is to be minimised
- Provides controls to prevent potential Harm
  - Discharges of pollutants
  - Management of wastewater lagoons
- Outlines the environmental values of water resources

# Water Quality Policy 2015

## 6—Environmental values of waters

- (1) For the purposes of this policy, waters may have 1 or more of the following environmental values:
  - (a) aquatic ecosystems;
  - (b) recreation and aesthetics;
  - (c) drinking water for human consumption;
  - (d) primary industries—irrigation and general water uses;
  - (e) primary industries—livestock drinking water;
  - (f) primary industries—aquaculture and human consumption of aquatic foods.
- (2) The environmental values of waters are set out in Schedule 1.

# Guidelines – Wastewater Lagoons

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## Wastewater Lagoon – Referral to EPA under Development Act

- Safeguard surface and groundwater resources
- Guidance on reasonable and practicable measures
  - General Environmental Duty.
- Clarity regarding criteria used for the assessment of wastewater lagoon proposals
- Demonstrate legislative requirements
  - the Environment Protection Act 1993 and
  - the Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2015.
- Minimise the potential for site contamination

# Guidelines – Wastewater Lagoons

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Lagoons must be designed and constructed:

- Wastewater cannot intersect any underlying seasonal water table
- Not liable to inundation or damage from flood waters
- Contents of the lagoon do not overflow
- Appropriately lined - minimise leakage
- Where required - appropriate leakage detection

# Questions?