

ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 11 October 2023

FORTHCOMING AEBN EVENTS



[AEBN WEBINARS]

- [SERIES 1 to Dangerous Goods, Hazardous Substances and GHS](#)
Covering: Regulatory framework, Identification, Classification, SDSs and Labelling
10.00am to 1.45pm (AM Half Day)
25 October 2023
- [SERIES 2 to Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances](#)
Covering: Rules and practical applications for the safe Storage & Handling and Transport
10.00am to 1.45pm (AM Half Day)
25 October 2023

FEDERAL

Surrender Small-Scale Technology Certificates Quarter 3 2023 deadline 30 October 2023

The Clean Energy Regulator reminds liable entities that the Quarter 3 (Q3) 2023 deadline for liable entities to surrender small-scale technology certificates (STCs) is **30 October 2023**.

Simply ensure you have enough STCs to meet your certificate surrender obligations and surrender by or before the deadline to avoid a shortfall charge of \$65 per certificate not surrendered.

The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) has no discretion to extend the surrender deadline.

National standards to manage 4 brominated flame-retardant chemicals:

Comment sought

The Federal Government is seeking your [feedback](#) on four proposed scheduling decisions on the management of chemicals that pose a high risk to the environment. The four proposed scheduling decisions come under the Industrial Chemicals Environment Management Standard (IChEMS).

These chemicals are flame retardants used in textiles, electronics, and in spare parts used in aircraft and motor vehicles.

These scheduling decisions will set national standards to manage four brominated flame-retardant chemicals:

- decabromodiphenyl ether (decaBDE)
- octabromodiphenyl ether (octaBDE)
- pentabromodiphenyl ether (pentaBDE)
- hexabromocyclododecane (HBCDD).

These chemicals are recognised internationally as Persistent Organic Pollutants with the potential to cause serious environmental harm if not managed properly.

Your feedback will help the Governments and business to manage the environmental risks of these

chemicals while allowing essential industrial uses for public safety and other purposes.

Please provide feedback by **25 October 2023**.

Large-scale Renewable Energy Target market data for August:

Released

The Clean Energy Regulator has released the August 2023 [Large-scale Renewable Energy Target market data](#) and shows the following highlights that include:

- 22 MW of capacity was approved for LGC generation in August, bringing the total approved in 2023 to 1,160 MW.
- All power stations approved in August had an installed capacity of <5 MW.

Report on heat pumps relating to refrigerants: Emerging trends in Australian marketplace

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water has released a [report](#) that looks at heat pumps from a refrigerant perspective, particularly at the types of hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) in equipment and any impact the increase in this equipment type in the Australian market will have on its future demands for HFCs (as a bulk gas), and therefore, Australia's phase down.

Hydrofluorocarbons (HFCs) are a type of synthetic greenhouse gas, mostly used in refrigeration and air

conditioning equipment. HFCs generally have a high global warming potential which means they have a greater ability to trap heat in the atmosphere compared to a similar mass of carbon dioxide. For example, the release of one tonne of HFC 23 is equivalent to releasing 14,800 tonnes of carbon dioxide into the atmosphere.

The report is now available.

VICTORIA

Administering your Powers under the Environment Protection Act:

A guide for councils and litter authorities

EPA Victoria (EPA) has developed the [Administering your powers under the Environment Protection Act guide](#) to support local government (councils) and other litter authorities to prepare for their role as joint regulators of the new *Environment Protection Act 2017* (the Act) and Environment Protection Regulations 2021 (the Regulations).

The guide provides important information for:

- **Councils** - who can regulate residential noise and on-site wastewater management systems with a design or actual flow rate of sewage not exceeding 5000 litres on any day (OWMS), and
- **Litter authorities, including councils** - who can regulate unlawful deposit of litter and other waste.

This guide is aimed at executives, managers, governance and legal departments and others who are responsible for corporate governance for councils and other litter authorities.

Compliance Code for Victoria's Big Build Projects:

Released by EPA Victoria

The Major Transport Infrastructure Authority (MTIA) is currently in the process of delivering eight major transport infrastructure projects (projects). EPA Victoria has released the [Compliance Code for Victoria's Big Build Projects](#) for those involved in the design and construction of those projects as they have duties and obligations under the Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic) (Act).

The Compliance Code provides practical guidance on how those involved should perform their duties and satisfy their obligations under section 166 of the Environment Protection Act 2017 (Vic) and relates to:

- North East Link Project
- Melbourne Metro Rail Project, known as the Metro Tunnel Project
- West Gate Tunnel Project
- Mordialloc Freeway (also referred to as the Mordialloc Bypass Project)
- Western Highway Project – Section 2B – Buangor to Ararat
- Echuca-Moama Bridge Project (Stage 3)
- Edithvale and Bonbeach Level Crossing Removal Projects
- Princes Highway East Duplication Project (Stage 3).

EPA Victorian considered a compliance code was the most appropriate tool to provide project duty holders with practical guidance on how to comply with their duties and obligations under the Act and Regulations. It focuses on the following duties and obligations:

- the [general environmental duty](#)
- the [duty to manage contaminated land](#)
- the [obligation not to emit or permit the emission of unreasonable noise from a place or premises that are not residential premises.](#)

New Victorian target for climate action

The Victorian Government has set ambitious targets to cut Victoria's greenhouse gas emissions for Victoria and to achieve net-zero emissions by 2045. The Victorian Government confirmed Victoria's newest target for 2035 and has released their report – [Victoria's 2035 Emissions Reduction Target](#).

The Victorian Government says Victoria was one of the first jurisdictions in the world to put a net-zero emissions target in law. It also brought forward the commitment to achieve net-zero from 2050 to 2045.

The set targets that provide a path to net-zero emissions are:

- 28-33% by 2025
- 45-50% by 2030
- 75-80% by 2035.

Victoria's targets are all reductions below 2005 emissions levels. Note: Victoria's 2040 target will be set by 2028.

Water Price Review 2024

The Essential Services Commission (ESC) is reviewing new prices and outcomes proposed by two water businesses and would like to hear your views.

The ESC is the state's independent economic regulator. Its role covers Victoria's energy, water and transport sectors, and also to administer the Fair Go Rates system and Victorian Energy Upgrades program.

In water, ESC regulates service standards and prices. The ESC issues price determinations that approve the maximum prices water businesses may charge. The prices that are approved by the ESC reflect an assessment of the efficient costs water businesses need to recover to provide valued services to customers.

ESC is now reviewing, under the PREMO pricing framework, submissions from Goulburn-Murray

Water and Greater Western Water covering their proposed prices and key service outcomes to apply from 1 July 2024.

Feedback is sought at all times throughout this price review to inform the ESC's decision-making process. In particular, ESC seeks feedback from customers and stakeholders of the water businesses upon receiving their price submissions and upon releasing its draft decisions.

Following consultation, ESC issues determinations that set the maximum prices that these water businesses may charge customers.

Please provide feedback by 15 December 2023 via the [online Survey](#).

EPA Science Report for Information only:

Summary of PFAS concentrations detected in the environment

EPA Victoria has released a new [science report on PFAS in the environment](#) to enable industry to identify PFAS concentrations in the environment from non-point sources. Unlike point-source pollution, which comes from one place like a pipe or drain, non-point pollution comes from many places. Examples of non-point sources specific to PFAS are runoff from land, food packaging, household products and dust.

The report is only for information and not guidance. It is a science report that summarises the state of knowledge on PFAS.

The report's data shows concentrations of PFAS (PFOS, PFHxS and PFOA) in:

- freshwater
- sediment
- riparian soil (e.g. soil samples collected next to freshwater).

This document provides information to improve Victorians understanding of PFAS concentrations in the ambient environment.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Air Quality Improvement Precincts Grants Program - Round 2 opens

Sustainability Victoria has announced funding through [Round 2 of the Air Quality Improvement Precincts Grant Program](#) that supports businesses located in Melbourne's west - identified as one of Victoria's air pollution hot spots - to reduce the emission of PM2.5 and PM10, common air polluting particles found in dust and smoke.

The funding guidelines are now available including the Terms of Participation and funding agreement terms and conditions.

Applications close at 11.59am on 9 November 2023.

New Residential Noise publication: Released

EPA Victoria has released an [updated residential noise](#) publication on how to address common residential noise issues in Victoria.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Review of Code of practice for safe use of synthetic mineral fibres:

Comment sought

SafeWork NSW is reviewing the [Code of practice for the safe use of synthetic mineral fibres](#) and seeks your feedback to ensure the Code is -

- is still relevant
- is easy to understand; and that it
- supports current and emerging work practices and technologies.

The Code provides information and guidance to ensure health and safety risks are identified, assessed, eliminated or controlled according to work health and safety laws.

Feedback is sought from builders, carpenters, and/or people that work with and install insulation, or people

who have a general interest in this subject.

Your feedback will help ensure the Code reflects current work practices and protects workers and the community.

Please provide your [feedback](#) by 8 October 2023.

Proposed new annual performance indicators for local water utilities:

Comment sought

The NSW Department of Planning and Environment is seeking feedback on the [proposed new annual performance indicators](#) for local water utilities and invites your comment on:

- the proposed additional NSW-specific indicators that are part of the full list of NSW performance indicators
- the proposed list of key performance indicators for focused reporting and benchmarking products on key performance information for utilities and their customers.

The new full list of NSW performance indicators is to replace the annual indicator set the department currently uses for all local water utilities from the 2024 to 2025 reporting year. This aligns with the introduction of the revised National Performance Report indicator set and to give utilities sufficient notice.

A webinar will be held on 12 September from 10:30am to 11:30am. [Register your attendance online](#).

Feedback is sought by 11.59pm 6 October 2023.

Bin Trim grants program to help businesses reduce waste and cut emissions

Fourteen successful projects will receive funding under the latest NSW's [Bin Trim grants](#) round, awarded by the NSW Government. The recipients are

expected to assist around 4,000 businesses. The recipients include:

- **MRA Consulting Group** has been awarded \$498,299 to establish circular food court networks and target key waste streams in shopping centres across Sydney, including single-use food containers.
- **Revolve Recycling** has been awarded \$500,000 to develop a 'Green Wheels' accreditation scheme for Personal Transport Vehicle businesses and minimise waste linked to bikes, e-bikes and scooters.
- **Cool Planet** has been awarded \$496,950 to educate more than 15,000 pre-school children on topics including how recycling works and stage engagement activities for staff and families. It will divert more than 1,000 tonnes of waste from early childhood education services. Key waste streams include food, soft plastics and nappies.

Bin Trim is one of Australia's largest business waste programs that is aimed at avoiding, reusing and reducing waste, as well as saving money and cutting carbon emissions. It encourages innovation and collaboration across industry sectors, supply chains and precincts to address problem waste materials.

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has also released the Bin Trim app, a free resource enabling all NSW businesses to conduct their own waste assessment, create an action plan to avoid and reduce waste, and monitor improvements over time.

Here is information on how businesses can get involved with the [Bin Trim program](#) or please call NSW EPA on 131 555.

NSW EPA blitz agricultural industry on pesticide sprays

NSW EPA is reminding [pesticide](#) users to spray responsibly following a challenging season last summer which had hundreds of hectares of crops wiped out by pesticide spray drift.

In response to this issue, NSW EPA has rolled out several targeted compliance campaigns and issued nearly 130 advisory letters in recent months, reminding pesticide users of their obligations under the law.

NSW EPA Executive Director Regulatory Practice & Services Steve Beaman said pesticides have a place in agriculture, but if they aren't used responsibly, users can face strong regulatory action.

"The EPA is travelling to agricultural regions across the state to talk to farmers and agronomists and hear their concerns about people misusing pesticides," Mr Beaman said.

NSW EPA wins appeal of sentence of recycler for fraud relating to NSW Return and Earn scheme

A NSW recycling company has been ordered to pay more than \$149,000 in fines and legal costs for exploiting the Return and Earn recycling scheme by double counting almost three million containers.

The recycling company had taken advantage of the scheme by returning containers they knew are ineligible as well as containers that had already received a refund.

This is NSW EPA's first prosecution regarding the Return and Earn Scheme under the *NSW Waste Avoidance and Resource Recovery Act 2001*.

The fine was handed down in the Land and Environment Court recently after NSW EPA appealed the sentence imposed by the Local Court last year, on the basis that fines totalling \$45,000 were unreasonably low and an insufficient deterrent.

EPA Acting Executive Director, Arminda Ryan said the EPA became aware of the fraudulent activity after detailed monitoring and audits at recycling facilities revealed anomalies that led to an investigation.

"To protect the integrity of the scheme, containers are closely monitored, and this will continue to help us root out fraudulent behaviour from individuals

and companies," said Ms Ryan.

In resentencing the recycling company, the Court took into account that the conduct was carried out systematically over a period of time and there was a significant financial benefit made by the company.

QUEENSLAND

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Growing the recovery of organic waste via food organic and garden organic fund

The QLD Government is providing funding through the [Growing the Recovery of Organic Waste via Food Organic and Garden Organic \(GROW FOGO\) Fund – South East Queensland](#) to supporting councils, industry and the community to take action towards becoming a zero-waste society, where waste is avoided, reused and recycled to the greatest extent possible.

The funding program provides grants to local government, industry, business and community groups in regional Queensland.

Organic waste makes up around half of what Queenslanders throw away each week in their kerbside waste (red lid) bin. Diverting organic material from landfill presents numerous environmental and economic benefits, ranging from significant landfill methane emissions reduction to the generation of a value-added product.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

New Hydrogen Hub near Whyalla, SA

The Federal and SA Governments are providing funding to support the establishment of the Port Bonython Hydrogen Hub. The project is being delivered under the under the Federal Government's Regional Hydrogen Hubs program.

Both government's have finalised the grant agreement to develop the Port Bonython Hydrogen Hub, near Whyalla.

Port Bonython is well positioned to become SA's first large-scale export terminal for hydrogen. The Hub will provide initial investment into key common-user infrastructure. It will also encourage early-mover hydrogen projects.

Together, the proposed projects at Port Bonython represent around a \$13 billion investment. They could generate up to 1.8 million tonnes of hydrogen by 2030.

The Hub project is led by the SA Government and supported by various industry-leading Project Partners.

Hydrogen hubs help give the hydrogen industry its springboard to scale. Hubs are locations where producers, users and exporters of hydrogen share infrastructure and expertise.

The Federal Government is investing over half a billion dollars for regional Hydrogen Hubs in places like the Pilbara, Kwinana, Gladstone, Townsville, the Hunter, Bell Bay, and the Upper Spencer Gulf.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

The end of commercial logging of native forests in WA

WA Australia will soon become one of the first states in Australia to end commercial logging of native forests.

From next year, timber will only be taken from WA's native forests to maintain forest health and for approved mine site operations.

WA's karri forests were predominately being chipped and exported overseas while jarrah sawlog products were mostly sent to other states within Australia.

Ban on e-waste going to landfill: Comment sought

The WA Government is seeking [feedback](#) on [regulations to ban e-waste from landfill](#).

E-waste items like televisions, mobile phones, computers, screens, data storage, refrigerators, dishwashers,

batteries, medical devices, lighting and lamps are included in the first phase of bans. Future phases are likely to capture small household appliances like kettles, toasters and vacuums, photovoltaics including solar panels, as well as monitoring and control equipment.

Businesses that have more than 200 employees or create more than 5 tonnes of regulated e-waste will need to responsibly manage e-waste and keep records of their waste management practices.

Operators of landfill sites must not dispose of regulated e-waste, and business and e-waste service providers must not send or leave regulated e-waste to landfill.

[Feedback](#) is sought by 5.00pm on Wednesday 22 November 2023.

Low-emissions electricity and renewable energy projects

The WA Government is seeking registrations of interest (ROIs) from large commercial and industrial users on their plans for [low-emissions electricity and renewable energy projects](#) to supply major projects in WA's main electricity grid – the South West Interconnected System

The Registration of interest (ROIs) will help inform how and when future transmission builds could happen and where renewable energy hubs could be located.

Following the WA Government's SWIS Demand Assessment, the ROI is expected to:

- establish the customer base that will shape future major transmission expansion projects;
- prioritise areas for grid investment in this first stage of investment; and
- gain valuable insight to enable policy setting for suitable funding arrangements.

Coordinated by Western Power and Energy Policy WA, the ROI will provide industrial customers an opportunity to submit their project plans, status, timing, and willingness to contribute to

network augmentation and connection costs.

This process seeks to inform and shape new funding mechanisms for accessing network capacity and will form the basis for potential new policy settings.

The ROI is open until 5.00pm on 1 November 2023.
