

ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 7 May 2025

UPCOMING AEBN EVENTS

LIVE Workshop Webinar -

Optimising Your Trade Waste Treatment Plant and Troubleshooting Workshop Webinar

10.00am – 3.00pm
18 June 2025

This interactive Workshop Webinar is designed to –

- assist you to optimise your trade waste treatment plant,
- provide an overview of trade waste regulations and requirements - how they operate in states/territories,
- explore the different trade waste treatment technologies and options available and highlight their strengths and weaknesses of each,
- explore the Introductory, Secondary, Tertiary and Advanced treatment options in trade waste management,
- explore the use of chemicals in trade waste treatment and how chemicals can enhance the treatment process reducing operational costs and ensuring compliance,

- reduce your trade waste costs,
- **TROUBLESHOOT with the experts:** The Workshop Webinar provides an opportunity to troubleshoot with the experts. Participants are encouraged to bring along their specific trade waste issues or queries to discuss with wastewater treatment experts.

FEDERAL

IChEMS proposed management of 6 standards:

Comment sought

The Advisory Committee on the Environmental Management of Industrial Chemicals (IChEMS Advisory Committee) is seeking feedback on the following [proposed management of 6 standards](#):

1. Decabromodiphenyl ethane (DBDPE)
2. Mercury and mercury compounds
3. 1,2-dibromoethane
4. Methylcyclopentadienyl manganese tricarbonyl (MMT)
5. 1,2-dichloroethane
6. Aryl sulfonate hydrotropes

The proposed standards relate to industrial uses of the chemicals/chemical groups, and their impacts on the environment.

The [Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management Standard](#) (IChEMS) does not manage

human health risks, nor does it regulate medical or agricultural uses. Feedback is sought on the proposed 6 standards that will help to ensure that Australian governments and businesses manage the environmental risks of these chemicals.

[Feedback is sought online](#) by 5.00pm, Friday 9 May 2025.

2023-24 Safeguard Mechanism data:

Released

The Clean Energy Regulator has released the [2023-24 Safeguard Mechanism](#) data that includes the first data published from the Safeguard Mechanism reforms. This extra data provides more insights into covered facilities' emissions and compliance actions.

In summary, the data shows that in 2023–24:

- 219 facilities were covered by the Safeguard Mechanism
- total safeguard emissions reduced from 138.7 million tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (Mt CO₂-e) in 2022-23, to 136.0 Mt CO₂-e in 2023-24
- 62 facilities received a total of 8.3 million Safeguard Mechanism credit units (SMCs) because their emissions were below their baseline following the application of the 4.9% decline rate.
- 7.1 million Australian carbon credit units and 1.4 million SMCs were surrendered to meet compliance obligations.

Quarter 1 of 2025 Carbon Market Report:

Released

The Clean Energy Regulator has released the [Quarter 1](#) of the 2025 Carbon Market Report (QCMR) data workbook that is published approx. between 2 to 3 weeks after the quarter concludes and prior to the full QCMR report.

This early data release provides the Australian carbon market access to this information. Forecasts and commentary on these data will be included in the full QCMR, expected prior to mid-June 2025. When the QCMR is published, the data workbook will be republished with quarter-specific data and charts that appear in the report.

VICTORIA

Fines for Victorian dairy farms for non-compliant of dairy effluent management

Recently, EPA Victoria inspected 43 dairy farms across three eastern Gippsland municipalities. It was found only 8 dairy farms in the area had passed the inspection for appropriate management of dairy effluent.

EPA authorised officers inspected dairy facilities on farms in Wellington, South Gippsland and East Gippsland Shires for leaks, poorly managed effluent ponds, faulty pumps and pipes, and contamination of nearby waterways and neighbouring farms.

Some of the farms where dairy effluent was best managed achieved success with conventional maintenance of ponds and equipment, while two stood out with new approaches, one with a fully automated dairy system and the other with concrete pads and a porous wall that sent liquid to storage tanks and avoided the need for ponds altogether.

EPA Gippsland Regional Manager Jessica Bandiera said poor management of dairy effluent is still far too common. Jessica said "Dairy effluent is valuable

fertiliser for your pasture if you manage it well, but it becomes a pollutant and a source of disease if it escapes to a waterway or neighbouring farm".

She added "We continue to identify non-compliant effluent management systems on dairy farms, this round of inspections identified risks to human health and the environment from bacteria, algae blooms from the increase in nutrient loads on waterways, and other hazards to the environment, livestock and people's health".

Inspections will continue. EPA officers running the latest operation issued 6 farms with Environmental Action Notices (EAN's) requiring the landholders to take specific actions by a set deadline, and EPA gave written compliance advice to the operators of 19 more farms.

The main issue they identified included:

- Too much vegetation growing in ponds
- Incorrect storage and bunding of farm chemicals
- Unregistered stockpiles of waste tyres for silage management
- Effluent ponds in need of desludging to restore their effectiveness

Information on [how to manage effluent on dairy farms](#) is available.

Carlton petrol station owner issued fine for contaminated soil and escape of fuel vapour

The owner of a Carlton petrol station, who is from NSW, has been fined \$5,928 for failing to show it was obeying an Environmental Action Notice from EPA Victoria.

The Notice followed an inspection by EPA officers who found problems with contaminated soil, groundwater and escaping fuel vapour at the site.

EPA Victoria issued the Environmental Action Notice, that requires the company to take action to rectify the problems and provide a progress report verified by an independent EPA-appointed environmental auditor.

Along with paying the fine, the company is still required to prepare and action a plan to rectify the problems at their Carlton site, and provide the independent report to confirm they are making progress.

"A regulatory notice from EPA is a clear set of instructions with a clear deadline, and those instructions are there to protect the community and the environment," said EPA Western Metropolitan acting Regional Manager Michael Collins-Levy. "EPA gives the recipient every chance to comply, and most businesses do the right thing," he said. "We won't hesitate to use sanctions where they are needed. You can't just fail to comply with the notice and expect it to go away."

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY for VIC timber industry businesses to transition from native timber harvesting

The Victorian Government is providing funding through Timber Innovation Grants VIC for native timber industry businesses to explore, invest and implement opportunities to support their transition away from native timber harvesting.

Funding is available to support businesses directly impacted by the [Victorian Forestry Plan](#) to:

- explore, investigate, and implement business transition opportunities
- undertake capital investment in business transition projects
- diversify and reorientate core business activities to support alternative employment opportunities
- develop and implement downstream manufacturing

opportunities using alternative fibre

- invest in new opportunities to process or manufacture using plantation timber feedstock and/or alternative fibre.

[Details](#) are now available.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Victorian Circular Economy Recycling Modernisation Fund (Round 5)

Sustainability Victoria is providing funding through [Round 5](#) of the Victorian Circular Economy Recycling Modernisation Fund.

The Fund aims to achieve the following outcomes:

- diversify and attract new investment to increase the quality of materials recovered for recycling
- attract reprocessing infrastructure to increase the quantity of materials re-entering manufacturing streams and improving the circularity of materials
- support technologies and processes that provide new or improved recycling and manufacturing solutions.

Grants of between \$250,000 and \$1,000,000 (ex GST) are available per project.

Applications close at **11.59pm on 12 May 2025**.

CEO EPA Victoria moves to Parks Victoria

EPA Victoria has announced the departure of their CEO Lee Miezi as he takes up a new role with Parks Victoria as CEO.

Lee was appointed CEO EPA Victoria in May 2021. During this time, Lee oversaw the introduction of a new legislative framework for EPA that allowed the organisation to focus

on preventing harm to the community and the environment.

It has been announced that the interim CEO will be Jocelyn (Joss) Crawford, Executive Director for Operations, EPA Victoria.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Sydney Water Licence Review:

Comment sought

NSW EPA is seeking feedback on its statutory [five-yearly review of the licences for Sydney Water's 23 sewage treatment systems](#) across Greater Sydney and the Illawarra.

The licences cover Sydney Water's sewage treatment plants and the associated network of pipes and pumping stations that convey sewage from homes and businesses to those treatment plants.

NSW EPA Director Adam Gilligan said all environment protection licences are required to be reviewed every five years to ensure the licences are fit for purpose and reflect contemporary best practice and operating measures.

Feedback is sought by **12 June 2025**.

Energy Bill payment for NSW small businesses

The NSW Government is providing assistance through the National Energy Bill Relief for Small Businesses in NSW that operate in embedded networks (on-supply).

Payment will be provided of up to \$325 in financial year 2024-25.

[Details](#) are now available.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY for NSW businesses to procure battery electric vehicles (BEVs) and smart chargers

The NSW Government is providing funding through the Electric Vehicle Fleets Incentive: Kick-start NSW program that provides incentives for NSW businesses to procure battery electric vehicles and smart chargers.

The funding is to support organisations to test electric vehicles in the early stage of their fleet transition.

The funding program is targeted at businesses operating car fleets in NSW.

[Details](#) are now available.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY for mineral and metal exploration programs

The NSW Government is providing funding under the Critical Minerals and High-Tech Metals Exploration Program NSW for exploration for critical minerals and high-tech metals.

The funding is available to promote investment in NSW minerals, through co-investment in underexplored areas to search for deposits of metallic minerals and critical minerals and high-tech metals.

The Exploration Program has the following funding streams:

- exploration geochemistry: up to \$50,000 per project
- exploration geophysics: up to \$70,000 per project
- exploration drilling (less than 250 metres depth): up to \$150,000 per project
- exploration drilling (greater than 250 metres depth): up to \$250,000 per project.

[Details](#) are now available.

Toxicology returns results of pesticides detected in poisoned Corella birds

With the recent mass poisoning of Corella birds in Newcastle, NSW EPA has confirmed toxicology results have returned stating that the presence of barley grain and pesticides were detected, with fenitrothion identified in the system of all the deceased birds.

Fenitrothion is a pesticide commonly used in agriculture to control insect pests.

Investigations of this nature can be challenging, particularly when the chemical involved is commonly used across a range of agricultural and pest control activities and is readily available for purchase.

NSW EPA reminds all pesticide users of the importance of using chemicals correctly, following label directions, and taking care to avoid impacts on non-target animals and the environment.

The negligent use of pesticides that harms non-target animals or plants can attract penalties of up to \$500,000 for individuals and \$2 million for corporations.

QUEENSLAND

New Draft QLD Waste Strategy 2025-2030: Comment sought

The QLD Government is seeking feedback on the [draft new Queensland Waste Strategy 2025-2030 – Less Landfill, More Recycling](#) that sets out how the QLD Government plans on reducing waste and increasing recycling to create economic opportunities.

The draft new Strategy outlines the direction needed to avoid generating waste in the first place and manage materials as valuable resources.

Queensland is working to reduce the amount of waste going to landfill each year.

Industry, businesses, local governments and the community are invited to have their say on whether the draft new Strategy can deliver –

- environmental and economic benefits,
- which waste types that are the most important to focus on, and
- the action needed to achieve our goals for Queensland.

To provide [online feedback](#), please read the [draft new Queensland Waste Strategy](#) as it contains a series of guiding questions and supporting information to help inform your feedback. Feedback is sought by **5.00pm AEST 26 June 2025**.

S/E QLD water security – level of search objectives: Comment sought

The QLD Government is seeking feedback to help shape the future of water security in South East QLD.

A consultation paper and video on the proposed changes to the desired level of service objectives for water security in SEQ have been provided to help you participate in this survey:

- [Level of service objectives - Discussion paper](#)
- [Level of service objectives - Explainer video](#)

Your answers to the questions in the survey will be considered when deciding whether the proposed changes to the desired level of service objectives for SEQ will be made. Please take the survey here - [Survey on SEQ water security - level of service objectives](#).

Your feedback is required by **11.59pm on 13 June 2025**.

End of Waste Code for Ferrous Slag

The QLD Government has released the End of Waste Code (EOW) for Ferrous Slag that states when the ferrous slag becomes a resource and any relevant requirements and/or conditions for its use.

The EOW for Ferrous Slag states that if the ferrous slag is not being used in accordance with the relevant requirements and/or conditions of this EOW code, it is considered a waste under section 8AA of the WRR Act and must be disposed of appropriately at a facility that is lawfully able to receive the waste. Please refer to the EOW for details.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY for QLD manufacturers seeking to increase energy efficiency measures

The QLD Government is providing funding, through the [Manufacturing Energy Efficiency Grant Program QLD](#), that provides grants of up to \$50,000 for Queensland-based manufacturers to improve energy efficiency measures and technology, reduce energy usage, costs and emissions.

Funding will be for projects that increase the uptake of energy efficiency measures and technology, including but not limited to:

- compressed air improvements
- electrification from gas or fuel based process to electric
- heat pumps
- industrial HVAC system
- lighting
- energy monitoring systems
- upgrades to motors including for compressors, pumps, fans conveyors, mixers, blowers and welders with higher efficiency models.

To be eligible, applicants must:

- be a QLD-based business whose principal activity and majority turnover is derived from manufacturing
- be registered for goods and service tax (GST)
- hold an active Australian business number (ABN)
- be a small to medium enterprise with between 5 and 200 full time equivalent (FTE) employees.
- have operated within QLD for a minimum of 12 months prior to applying.

It will remain open until **30 June 2025** or until all funding is allocated.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

SA Mining Act review:

Comment sought

The SA Department for Energy and Mining is [seeking feedback](#) on a range of potential improvements and opportunities for improving the Mining Act 1971 which may inform a future legislative reform process.

The *Mining Act 1971* provides a legal framework for the exploration and development of SA's mineral resources.

The Department for Energy and Mining monitors the Act's effectiveness to ensure the legislation remains fit-for-purpose.

Informed by industry and community feedback, regulatory approaches and developments in other jurisdictions, the department has identified further potential enhancements to the regulatory framework.

[Further details](#) are now available.

SA River Murray irrigators projected to receive full water allocation in 2025-26

The SA Government has announced that SA River Murray irrigators are projected to receive their full water allocations in 2025-26.

The most recent advice provided by the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, based on a 'worst-case' water availability projection, is that SA will receive an annual River Murray Entitlement above the minimum threshold for full allocations.

Availability of SA's Entitlement is driven by storage levels upstream, which are considered average for this time of year.

Department for Environment and Water, Executive Director for Water and River Murray, Sue Hutchings, said it was the fifth straight year that allocations would open at the full 100% and should bring some reassurance to SA industry and communities who rely on the River Murray for their water.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Rebates for zero emission vehicle (ZEV) purchases

The WA Government's [Zero Emission Vehicle rebate scheme](#) provides \$3,500 for up to 10,000 eligible vehicles until June 2025.

The rebate is only available for the following types of vehicle:

- Light vehicles with a gross vehicle mass of 4.5 t or less which are passenger vehicles, sports utility vehicles, light commercial vehicles, and light trucks;
- fully powered by batteries or hydrogen fuel cells (hybrid vehicles with internal combustion engines are not covered);
- a dutiable value of \$70,000 or less, Division 5 of the Duties Act 2008; • never previously registered or licensed (anywhere in the world);

- granted a vehicle licence in WA on or after 10 May 2022.

The [Zero Emission Vehicle \(ZEV\) Rebate Scheme](#) is a financial incentive to encourage the purchase of zero emission vehicles as part of the Government's Clean Energy Car Fund.