

ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 21 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

New landfill gas method:

Comment sought

The Emissions Reduction Assurance Committee (ERAC) is seeking feedback on an [Exposure Draft](#) of a new landfill gas method – the *Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative – Reducing Methane Emissions from Landfill Gas) Methodology Determination 2025*. An [explanatory statement](#) has also been released.

The exposure draft addresses Recommendation 10 of the Independent Review of Australian Carbon Credit Units (Chubb Review) and the objectives of the *Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Act 2011* (CFI Act). The exposure draft of the new method also proposes to continue support for emissions reduction activities included in the Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative – Landfill Gas) Methodology Determination 2015 that expired on 31 March 2025.

Feedback will assist the Committee to assess the proposed method against the legislated offset integrity standards.

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and

Water has separately released [supplementary material](#) that sets out the proposed reforms to the ACCU Scheme landfill gas methods and the evidence that justifies the proposed reforms. This material is intended to assist stakeholders in understanding the evidence base for the proposed reforms and to set out the rationale for the changes.

[Comment](#) is sought on the exposure draft by 11.59pm on 12 June 2024, or email ACCUScheme@dcceew.gov.au for enquiries.

Options to improve the water efficiency of commercial ice makers:

Comment sought

The Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) scheme is seeking comment on a [draft Regulatory Impact Analysis to improve the water efficiency of commercial ice makers](#) that identifies a range of policy options and the associated costs and benefits.

This consultation is being conducted with knowledge of the recent regulation of commercial ice makers for Minimum Energy Performance Standards (MEPS) under the *Greenhouse and Energy Minimum Standards Act 2012*.

The implementation of MEPS will enable the voluntary declaration of commercial ice maker potable water use and condenser water use (in the case of water-cooled ice makers). Any potential regulation of commercial ice makers in relation to water efficiency (e.g. mandatory water efficiency disclosure or minimum water efficiency standards) would occur under the WELS Act.

The WELS scheme will outline the preferred policy option in a final

Regulatory Impact Analysis, and will do this before implementing any water efficiency requirements in relation to commercial ice makers.

Online [feedback](#) is sought by 5.00pm AEDT on Friday, 20 June 2025.

VICTORIA

Proposed amendments to Water (General) Regulations:

Comment sought

The Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action is inviting feedback on the [consultation paper](#) on proposed Water (General) Amendment Regulations 2025 that will remake the following two sets of regulations as they sunset on 22 June 2025:

- [Water \(Estimation, Supply and Sewerage\) Regulations 2014](#)
- [Water \(Trade Waste\) Regulations 2014](#)

The remade provisions will be incorporated into the [Water \(General\) Regulations 2021](#), thereby creating the Water (General) Amendment Regulations 2025.

Victoria needs fit for purpose regulations to ensure the state has safe, sustainable and productive water resources. The Water (General) Amendment Regulations 2025 bring together different sets of existing regulations to provide updated and improved provisions under the Water Act 1989.

[Comment](#) is sought by 11.59pm, 25 May 2025.

The Energy Safety Review consultation:

Comment sought

The Victorian Department of Energy, Environment, and Climate Action (DEECA) has released for comment a [consultation paper on The Energy Safety Review](#) that aims to identify key safety risks, evaluate current

regulatory frameworks, and propose reforms to ensure Victoria's energy safety framework remains robust during the transition to renewable energy.

Victoria's energy system is evolving rapidly as Victoria transitions to renewable energy sources, decentralise the grid, and adopt new technologies such as lithium-ion batteries and renewable hydrogen. This shift introduces new safety risks for workers, communities, and infrastructure.

Key themes of the study include:

1. Identifying emerging risks from renewable energy technologies.
2. Assessing the strengths and gaps of the current regulatory framework.
3. Developing recommendations for immediate, medium-term, and systemic reforms.

Please review the draft findings and provide [feedback](#) to shape the final recommendations by 11.59pm, 10 June 2025.

Setting new targets for 2026 to 2027 for Victorian Energy Upgrades program:

Response to consultation released

The Victorian Minister for Energy and Resources, the Hon Lily D'Ambrosio MP, will set the [Victorian Energy Upgrades \(VEU\) program](#) targets at:

- 4.4 million Victorian Energy Efficiency Certificates (VEECs) in 2026, and
- 4.6 million VEECs in 2027.

To achieve these targets, the VEU program will likely need to generate 6 million VEECs per year in 2026 and 2027. This is expected to rebuild the level of VEEC surplus required to support an effective and liquid VEEC market. This increased liquidity is required to ensure liable retailers are able to surrender enough VEECs to

meet the targets.

The Victorian Minister for Energy and Resources will raise the shortfall penalty rate to \$100, to ensure all liable retailers are incentivised to purchase VEECs to meet their emission reduction obligations and provide a buffer for short-term VEEC price fluctuations.

The [Victorian Energy Upgrades \(VEU\) program](#) is the Victorian Government's flagship energy savings and emissions reduction program. The program promotes energy efficiency upgrades in [residential](#), [business](#) and [industrial](#) premises. Discounts are available for energy consumers to reduce energy use by upgrading appliances, processes or buildings.

In 2024, over 22,000 businesses and 488,000 households received discounted energy efficient upgrades. These upgrades cut Victoria's emissions by 4.9 million tonnes in 2024.

[Further details](#) are now available.

EPA Victoria sends reminder to agriculture sector to correctly dispose of waste

EPA Victoria is reminding agricultural businesses to refer to the [guide for farm waste management](#) to help with correctly disposing of this waste.

In 2024, EPA Victoria issued several reminders after receiving reports of farms, orchards and vineyards mixing their legitimate burn off materials with waste like treated timbers, plastics and other common farm waste. These wastes should have been disposed of to a licensed landfill or recycling facility and at a place that is licensed to accept these wastes.

NEW SOUTH WALES

First NSW waste and circular infrastructure Plan:

Comment sought

NSW EPA is seeking your feedback on the [draft NSW Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan: Chapter 1 - Meeting our residual and food and garden organic waste needs](#) – the first Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan for NSW.

The draft Plan aims to guide urgent decisions and prevent a waste crisis in Greater Sydney, and to ensure NSW has infrastructure in place to meet its food and garden organic waste needs. Your [feedback](#) is sought by 5.00pm on 25 June 2025 on proposed actions such as streamlining planning approvals, enabling energy-from-waste infrastructure, and strengthening long-term planning frameworks.

Proposed Protection from Harmful Radiation Regulation 2025:

Comment sought

NSW EPA is seeking feedback on [proposed changes to the regulation for radiation protection](#).

The proposed changes aim to strengthen radiation safety obligations, better align provisions with international and national best practice, and enhance risk-based control measures to improve radiation practices.

NSW EPA proposes to remake the current regulation with changes in line with requirements to periodically review NSW regulations.

Feedback is sought from radiation licensees and accredited persons, key stakeholders and the community to gain a broader understanding on improving the regulation for radiation protection to ensure it effectively protects people and the environment from the harmful effects of radiation, while enabling safe and beneficial uses.

To provide feedback, please review the proposed Regulation together with the Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) that describes the aims and reasons for the proposed changes and assesses their costs and benefits.

[Feedback](#) is sought by 10 June 2025.

QUEENSLAND

South East QLD water security – level of service objectives:

Comment sought

The QLD Department of Local Government, Water and Volunteers is undertaking consultation to help shape the future of South East QLD's water security – level of service objectives.

Water security is about making sure there is enough water to meet the needs of businesses and the community over the long term, including during drought.

The Department has undertaken a five yearly review of the desired level of service objectives for the South East QLD water supply. The Department is now considering changes to the water security framework – the level of service objectives for South East QLD. The level of service objectives are a way of describing the security of water supply communities can expect.

The [discussion paper](#) will guide a greater understanding of the importance of water security and level of service objectives, present the current level of service objectives, and provide a summary of assessment findings.

The discussion 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. The [Level of service objectives – Public notice](#) is also available.

Please provide feedback via the [online survey](#) 5.00pm on 13 June 2025.

Practice Note 1 – Regional biodiversity values land use and management policy:

Released

The QLD Government has released [Practice Note 1 Regional biodiversity values land use and management policy](#) that provides regional biodiversity values (RBV) policy recommendations to guide a consistent approach to protect and manage mapped RBV.

The information in the practice note can be used to inform regional and local land use and management planning prepared under the Planning Act 2016, including local government planning schemes (as matters of local environmental significance), and non-statutory land use and natural resource management plans.

The practice note contributes to implementing the biodiversity outcomes of the following policy and legislative instruments:

- Environmental Planning Act 1994
- Nature Conservation Act 1992
- Planning Act 2016
- Queensland State Planning Policy (matters of Local environmental significance)
- Conserving Nature—a Biodiversity Conservation Strategy for Queensland
- Reef 2050 Long-Term Sustainability Plan
- Reef 2050 Wetlands Strategy.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Bill passes to repeal Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008

The SA Government repealed, last month, the *Plastic Shopping Bags (Waste Avoidance) Act 2008*, that introduces stronger penalties, which are now in force, under the [Single-use and Other Plastic Products \(Waste Avoidance\) Act 2020](#), or Single-use Plastics Act.

The maximum penalty for providing a plastic shopping bag is \$20,000 for a manufacturer, producer, wholesaler or

distributor, and \$5,000 in other cases, such as for a retailer.

The repeal reinforces SA Government's efforts to remove plastic shopping bags, with the ban on all plastic shopping bags now included in the more broadly scoped *Single-use and Other Plastic Products (Waste Avoidance) Act 2020*, or Single-use Plastics Act.

The Single-use Plastics Act includes an exemption for Australian Standard (AS) certified compostable shopping bags, as well as additional exemptions for commonly used reusable shopping bags made from plastic materials such as nylon, polyester, woven polypropylene and non-woven polypropylene.

There is also a 3-year temporary exemption, until 1 September 2027, for charitable organisations who receive donations of goods from the public in plastic shopping bags. This time period enables charities to use existing plastic bags in circulation to receive donated items and reuse for the sales of the goods.

EPA SA will continue to administer the current Act.

- **Stronger native plant laws** providing clearer regulations to safeguard native vegetation
- **Tougher penalties** to create stronger deterrence against environmental harm
- **Critical habitat protections** – by introducing a new process to identify and safeguard habitats vital for the survival of threatened species
- **A new process for listing threatened species** and threatened ecological communities, which aligns with other Australian jurisdictions and receives expert input from the scientific committee.
- **A nationally consistent process** to assess and recognise threatened native species and ecological communities.

Penalties for people that harm or traffic native animals or illegally clear native habitat will also be increased to a maximum \$500,000 for businesses, a significant increase on existing fines that range from \$2500 to \$100,000.

The new Act would include a maximum \$250,000 fine or five years' jail for individuals convicted of illegally killing, catching, restraining, injuring, keeping or interfering with a protected animal.

This guideline should be read alongside relevant legislation, regulations, and existing guidance materials.

Landfill facility to accept PFAS contaminated waste

The WA Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER) has finalised its assessment of Cleanaway Solid Waste Pty Ltd's application to amend its licence for the Banksia Road Putrescible Landfill Facility to allow the disposal of Special Waste Type 3 – PFAS-contaminated waste.

Following a detailed risk assessment, DWER has determined that the landfill's infrastructure and Cleanaway's proposed operational controls are appropriate to manage the risks associated with PFAS-contaminated waste that doesn't exceed the concentration limits for a range of other contaminants for a Class III landfill. This is undertaken in line with the PFAS National Environmental Management Plan 3.0 (PFAS NEMP) and the Landfill Waste Classifications and Waste Definitions (1996) as amended in 2019. Each consignment of PFAS-contaminated waste must be tested for suitability across a range of criteria before being brought to and accepted on site.

[Details](#) are available.

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Clearing native vegetation – Part IV and Part V interactions guide

The WA Department of Water and Environmental Regulation has released the [Clearing Native Vegetation – Part IV and Part V interactions guide](#).

This guideline provides information on how Part IV and Part V of the *Environmental Protection Act 1986* interact in the regulation of native vegetation clearing, including circumstances where exemptions from clearing permits may apply following a Part IV approval.

SA's first Biodiversity Act introduced to SA Parliament

SA's has introduced to the SA Parliament their first *Biodiversity Act* that includes new provisions to better protect SA native animals and plants, build resilience to the effects of climate change, and to reduce red tape for development.

The new *Act* improves recognition for threatened species and provides opportunities for investment in restoring nature. It will consolidate biodiversity considerations, previously spread across several pieces of legislation.

The Biodiversity Act includes:

- **A new general duty** ensuring that all SAs play a role in protecting biodiversity