

# ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 28 October 2025

## UPCOMING AEBN EVENTS

For a list of upcoming AEBN events, please visit [Events](#).

Missed an AEBN event? Some AEBN events are recorded and made available to Members on AEBN's [Webinars On-Demand](#).

### FEDERAL

#### Clean Energy Regulator Issues 2025–26 Compliance Update

The Federal Clean Energy Regulator (CER) has released the Compliance Update for 2025–26, outlining key compliance expectations, areas of enforcement focus, and recent regulatory actions across the national schemes it administers. The update reinforces the CER's commitment to maintaining the integrity of Australia's carbon, energy, and renewable schemes.

#### Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme

The CER continues to review ACCU projects that have missed or are nearing reporting deadlines. Projects unable to provide a credible plan to return to compliance will be revoked. Between July and September 2025, 26 projects were voluntarily revoked, with a further 25 under assessment. No credits have been issued to these projects.

Project proponents must promptly notify the CER of any events affecting their operations, such as bushfires or floods. Failure to report or maintain compliance may result in civil penalties or relinquishment of credits. A new online notification form has been released to streamline reporting obligations - [Notify the Regulator Form](#)

#### National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) Scheme and Safeguard Mechanism

Organisations must submit 2024–25 NGER reports by 31 October 2025, through the new Emissions and Energy Reporting System (EERS), accessed through [Online Services](#). No extensions will be granted. The next major compliance milestone under the Safeguard Mechanism is 31 March 2026, when facilities exceeding their emissions baseline must surrender ACCUs or Safeguard Mechanism Credit Units (SMCs).

Failure to meet obligations may result in civil penalty proceedings, with enforceable undertakings accepted only in exceptional cases.

#### Renewable Energy Target (RET)

The CER permanently suspended an entity from creating renewable energy certificates under the *Renewable Energy (Electricity) Act 2000*, after determining the company was not a fit and proper person to participate in the scheme. This follows similar actions against affiliated companies.

Inspections have now expanded to include solar battery systems under the Cheaper Home Batteries Program. Of the 100 systems inspected, all were

found safe; however, around half had minor labelling or installation issues. Installers repeatedly failing to meet standards risk loss of accreditation.

The CER has also confirmed 100% on-time compliance for second quarter Small-scale Technology Certificate (STC) surrenders.

#### Enforcement and Audit Oversight

The CER continues to enforce Federal Court civil penalty orders against non-compliant parties. In one case, an individual found to have submitted false solar installation information has since been declared bankrupt after failing to pay penalties and legal costs.

The Regulator also monitors the performance of greenhouse and energy auditors. Following inspection outcomes, two auditors were issued with compliance letters regarding documentation and professional standards. One accepted an improvement plan, while another applied for deregistration. Auditors failing to meet required standards may face suspension or deregistration.

#### Conclusion

The 2025–26 compliance priorities reflect a continued focus on ensuring integrity and accountability across the ACCU, NGER, Safeguard Mechanism, and RET schemes.

Further information, including the full Compliance Update 2025–26, is available on the [CER website](#).

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## Migration of Australian Carbon Credit Units to New Registry to Begin 7 November

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The Clean Energy Regulator has confirmed that the migration of Australian Carbon Credit Units (ACCUs) from the Australian National Registry of Emissions Units (ANREU) to new ANREU accounts in the Unit and Certificate Registry will begin at 6:00 pm (AEDT) on Friday, 7 November 2025.

Both systems will be taken offline during the migration and testing period, with completion expected by Monday, 10 November 2025. ACCU holdings are expected to be live in the Unit and Certificate Registry from 8:00 am (AEDT) on Tuesday, 11 November 2025, when users will be able to access their updated accounts via Online Services.

The Regulator has confirmed that accuracy and completeness of data remain its top priority, noting that multiple test migrations have been completed to ensure a smooth transition. The migration is part of a broader effort to modernise Australia's carbon credit registry system and streamline management of carbon units under the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme.

Account holders are encouraged to download and save their own records—including PDFs or CSV files of holdings and transaction logs—from the existing ANREU system both before and after the migration. Any discrepancies can be reported directly to the Regulator once systems are live.

Updated information on the migration process, including any timing changes, will be published on the [Unit and Certificate Registry webpage](#). Following the migration, the Regulator will release video demonstrations explaining new features and will host an online Q&A session on 25 November 2025 for users. Visit

[Migration of ACCUs to the new registry Q&A](#) to register attendance.

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## Consultation Opens on 2026 Review of the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme

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The Climate Change Authority (CCA) has commenced public consultation to inform its 2026 statutory review of the *Carbon Credits (Carbon Farming Initiative) Act 2011*, which underpins the operation of the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme.

The review will assess how effectively the ACCU Scheme supports Australia's decarbonisation goals and ensure it continues to deliver credible carbon abatement and integrity in emissions reduction activities. The CCA is seeking feedback on how the scheme currently operates and the broader role of ACCUs in supporting the transition to a net zero economy.

The consultation invites submissions from all interested stakeholders, including businesses participating in carbon projects, emissions-intensive industries, and other sectors engaged in emissions management. Feedback will help shape the CCA's recommendations to the Australian Government.

The Authority's final report is due to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy by the end of 2026, with the Government required to publish a response once the review is complete.

Submissions are open until 5:00 pm AEDT, Monday 8 December 2025.

Further information, including consultation questions and submission details, is available on the [Climate Change Authority Consultation Hub](#).

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## Q3 2025 Quarterly Carbon Market Report Data Released

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The Clean Energy Regulator (CER) has released the data workbook for the Q3 2025 Quarterly Carbon Market Report (QCMR), providing early access to key data from Australia's carbon markets ahead of the full report's publication in late November.

The QCMR provides detailed insights into the operation of the Australian Carbon Credit Unit (ACCU) Scheme, the Safeguard Mechanism, and broader carbon market activity. The data workbook includes updated figures on certificate issuances, surrenders, market activity and project trends for the July–September 2025 quarter.

The CER releases this dataset approximately two to three weeks after each quarter ends, allowing market participants, investors, and regulated entities to access information sooner. When the full QCMR is published, the workbook will be updated to include additional data and analysis contained in the report.

The dataset is a valuable resource for organisations monitoring carbon price movements, project trends, and compliance activity under national emissions reduction schemes.

The Q3 2025 QCMR data workbook is now available for download from the [Clean Energy Regulator website](#).

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## Consultation Opens on Proposed Water Markets Information Regulations

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The Australian Government has released the Exposure Drafts for the proposed [Water Amendment \(Water Markets Information\) Regulations 2026 and the Water Markets Data Standards \(WMDS\)](#) for public consultation. These reforms aim to increase transparency and confidence

in the operation of water markets across the Murray-Darling Basin.

The draft Regulations and Data Standards build on recommendations from the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's 2021 Inquiry into Murray–Darling Basin Water Markets and the subsequent *Water Market Reform: Final Roadmap* published in October 2022. The Federal and Basin state governments have agreed in-principle to implement the 23 recommendations in the Roadmap to enhance the integrity, efficiency, and oversight of water trading.

The proposed Regulations are made under the *Water Act 2007*, as amended by the *Water Amendment (Restoring Our Rivers) Act 2023*. They will require specific persons and entities to collect and provide water trading data to the Bureau of Meteorology, including information about trades and offers to trade, in accordance with the new WMDS.

These changes are designed to make Basin water trading more open, fair, and trustworthy by strengthening the accuracy and accessibility of market information available to regulators and market participants.

Submissions on the Exposure Draft Regulations and Data Standards are now open. A public Information Webinar will be held on 30 October 2025. Registration, further information and consultation documents are available on the [DCCCEW website](#).

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### **Consultation Opens on Design of the Green Aluminium Production Credit**

The Federal Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) has opened consultation on the design of the Green Aluminium Production Credit (GAPC) - a \$2 billion initiative under the Future Made in Australia

Plan aimed at supporting low-emissions aluminium production.

The GAPC is intended to reduce carbon emissions from aluminium smelting by supporting the sector's transition to renewable electricity. The program seeks to strengthen global competitiveness, create economic benefits for regional communities, and position Australian aluminium as a leader in the emerging green metals market.

Under the proposal, aluminium smelters will be required to demonstrate verified reductions in carbon emissions before the end of 2035 to qualify for an emissions-linked credit contract. Credits would be payable per tonne of verified "green aluminium" produced for up to 10 years or until 2044, whichever occurs first. The final value of the credits would vary depending on individual facility production costs.

This program is designed to assist the manufacturing sector in achieving emissions reductions and to help Australia meet its net-zero commitments while maintaining competitiveness in the global supply chain for low-emission materials.

Submissions are now open. Further information, including the consultation paper, is available on the [DISR website](#).

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### **\$25 Million Investment to Advance Australian Battery Technology**

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) will provide \$25 million in funding to an Australian-based battery technology company to accelerate the commercial deployment of its new battery energy storage system. The funding forms part of the Australian Government's broader effort to strengthen local innovation in renewable energy storage and grid resilience.

The new system is designed to generate grid-ready alternating current (AC) directly from battery cells without using a traditional inverter. This approach reduces system costs, lowers battery degradation rates and is expected to improve the reliability and efficiency of energy storage. Over its operational life, the technology is projected to deliver around 20% more usable energy than standard systems.

Under the program, the company will deploy up to 100 megawatt hours (MWh) of these battery systems across commercial, industrial and small front-of-meter sites. These installations will provide real-world operating data and support the integration of renewable energy into the grid. A knowledge-sharing component is also included to help the broader energy sector adopt similar technologies and enhance grid stability.

The project builds on earlier ARENA-supported work developing second-life electric vehicle battery applications. In a related initiative, the company has also received \$2.9 million in matched funding through the Industry Growth Program to further develop cell-level battery control technology for potential use in heavy transport and mining applications.

Both initiatives align with national objectives under the National Reconstruction Fund, which prioritises renewable and low-emissions technologies and the expansion of Australian manufacturing capability.

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### **Renewable Hydrogen – Lessons Learned and the Need for Ongoing Industry Support**

The Australian Renewable Energy Agency (ARENA) has released new insights on Australia's progress toward renewable hydrogen development, highlighting lessons learned from more than \$370 million invested in 65

hydrogen projects over the past eight years, as well as two major projects funded under the first Hydrogen Headstart round.

The analysis confirms that renewable hydrogen has the potential to help decarbonise up to 10% of Australia's emissions, particularly in hard-to-electrify sectors such as ammonia production, iron and steel, alumina processing, and heavy transport. However, the pathway to commercial competitiveness remains challenging. High capital costs, limited local manufacturing capability for electrolyzers, and a shortage of skilled workers continue to slow development. Current hydrogen production costs are estimated at \$3-4 per kilogram, compared with the \$2/kg target needed to compete with fossil fuels.

ARENA emphasises that Australia is well-positioned to become a global leader in renewable hydrogen due to its abundant renewable energy resources and strong trading relationships. Continued collaboration between industry, investors, and government will be essential to ensure hydrogen delivers on its decarbonisation potential.

Further insights and project findings are available via the [ARENA Knowledge Bank](#).

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### **AICIS to Collect Information on the Introduction and Use of PFAS in Australia**

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The Australian Industrial Chemicals Introduction Scheme (AICIS) has announced a new national information collection on the introduction and use of per- and poly-fluoroalkyl substances (PFAS) in Australia. The action follows the initiation of a formal evaluation under section 74 of the *Industrial Chemicals Act 2019* by the AICIS Executive Director.

The evaluation will review 522 PFAS chemicals currently listed on the Australian Inventory of Industrial Chemicals. It aims to confirm whether these substances have been introduced into Australia, in what volumes, and for what end uses. The review will also identify any PFAS requiring further regulatory evaluation due to environmental or health concerns.

All businesses registered with AICIS between 1 September 2023 and 31 August 2025 will receive a notice via email under section 76 of the *Industrial Chemicals Act 2019*. The notice will require registrants to provide detailed information on any listed PFAS imported or manufactured during the 2023–24 and 2024–25 registration years.

Each registrant must report whether they have introduced any of the listed PFAS, the chemical name and CAS number, mode of introduction (import or manufacture), total volume introduced, and its end use. If information cannot be provided, the reason must be stated. Registrants are not required to report PFAS that qualify as excluded introductions under section 11 of the Act.

Submissions must be provided within 40 working days of receiving the notice, using a unique web form supplied by AICIS. Businesses are also encouraged to provide additional relevant information voluntarily under section 75 of the Act.

The information gathered will inform AICIS's ongoing [Rolling Action Plan](#) and support national efforts to manage the risks associated with PFAS.

Further information, including the full list of 522 listed PFAS and details on submission requirements, is available on the [AICIS website](#).

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### **Advisory Committee on Environmental Management of Industrial Chemicals – Applications Open**

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The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has opened applications for membership to the [Advisory Committee on the Environmental Management of Industrial Chemicals](#). This independent committee provides expert advice to the Minister for the Environment and Water on the environmental management and scheduling of industrial chemicals.

The Committee's role is to ensure that chemicals used across Australian industries are managed safely to protect the environment. It provides advice on chemical properties, environmental risks, end uses and socio-economic considerations.

Since the *Industrial Chemicals Environmental Management (Register) Act 2021* came into effect, 33 individual chemicals or chemical groups have been scheduled, resulting in standards being applied to more than 2,100 related substances. These standards guide safe use, storage, and disposal practices across sectors handling industrial chemicals, including manufacturing and processing industries.

Professionals with technical or scientific expertise, and recognised standing in relevant fields, are encouraged to apply to contribute to national chemical management policy and practice.

Further information, including the Candidate Information Pack and application details, is available on the [Advisory Committee on the Environmental Management of Industrial Chemicals](#) website. Applications close at 11:59 pm AEDT, Friday 7 November 2025.

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## Roadmap Released to Expand the Commercial Buildings Disclosure Program

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The Assistant Minister for Climate Change and Energy has announced the release of the Roadmap to Expand the Commercial Buildings Disclosure (CBD) Program. The roadmap outlines how the program will support the decarbonisation of Australia's commercial building sector under the Built Environment Sector Plan, part of the Government's Net Zero Plan.

The Australian Government has allocated \$10 million to expand the CBD program and a further \$10 million to accelerate investment in the National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS). The commercial building sector is a significant energy user, accounting for 24% of Australia's electricity use and 10% of total greenhouse gas emissions.

The roadmap details how expanding the CBD program will help the sector improve energy efficiency, reduce emissions, lower operating costs, and support the transition to a net zero economy. The current program, operating since 2011, requires disclosure of energy performance information for office spaces larger than 1,000 square metres being sold or leased. This transparency has already helped reduce emissions, cut business costs, and encourage energy-efficient investment.

The planned expansion will be implemented in stages and may include:

- Extending the program to large hotels and certain office tenants;
- Lowering the size threshold for covered buildings; and
- Expanding coverage beyond corporate ownership to other property owners.

Further information about the roadmap, the CBD expansion, and the existing program is available at the [Commercial Building Disclosure](#) website.

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## Collaboration to Accelerate Innovation and Decarbonisation in the Resources Sector

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The CSIRO has outlined how stronger collaboration between industry, research organisations and government is driving innovation and emissions reduction across Australia's minerals and resources sector.

The announcement highlights that the mining and processing industries are facing simultaneous challenges — meeting surging global demand for critical minerals while also decarbonising operations and adapting to digital and automation technologies. Demand for minerals used in clean energy technologies, such as lithium and rare earths, has doubled since 2019 and is projected to double again by 2030.

Recent partnerships are targeting practical solutions to improve efficiency, lower emissions, and strengthen supply chain resilience. These include:

- The Green Metals Innovation Network (GMIN) — a \$10 million initiative jointly led by CSIRO and the Heavy Industry Low-carbon Transition Cooperative Research Centre (HILT CRC). The network is supporting the development of low-emission metal production, including iron, steel, alumina and aluminium.
- The Australian Critical Minerals Research and Development Hub, established in 2022 by the Department of Industry, Science and Resources, brings together CSIRO, ANSTO and Geoscience Australia to coordinate national

research and address technical barriers to scaling critical minerals processing.

Both initiatives are designed to fast-track the commercialisation of low-carbon technologies, develop local manufacturing capacity, and strengthen Australia's position in international supply chains for renewable and low-emission materials.

The CSIRO has emphasised that collaboration and knowledge sharing between sectors are essential to accelerating technology deployment and maintaining competitiveness as Australia transitions to a low-emissions resources economy.

Further information on these programs and current projects is available on the [CSIRO website](#).

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## VICTORIA

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### Consultation Opens on EPA Victoria's Guidance for Minimising Pollution and Waste Risks in a Changing Climate

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The Victorian Environment Protection Authority (EPA Victoria) has released draft Guidance for Minimising Pollution and Waste Risks in a Changing Climate and is seeking feedback from businesses and local governments before 3 December 2025.

The draft guidance aims to help organisations understand and manage how climate change hazards, such as floods, heatwaves, droughts, bushfires and sea-level rise, can increase pollution and waste risks. These hazards can damage infrastructure, disrupt containment systems and lead to harmful emissions or contamination.

The guidance is designed for organisations undertaking medium- to high-risk activities, including:

- Storage and handling of liquids, solids or chemicals outdoors;
- Treatment and storage of waste or wastewater;
- Operations in climate-vulnerable areas such as floodplains, coastal zones and bushfire-prone regions; and
- Activities where damage to structures or equipment could result in the release of pollutants.

The EPA's draft guidance provides a framework to:

- Incorporate physical climate risks into existing risk management systems;
- Link climate-related impacts with pollution and waste hazards;
- Identify and assess pollution and waste risks under changing climate conditions; and
- Apply controls consistent with the general environmental duty under Victoria's environment protection legislation.

The document also includes an appendix for low-risk activities and draws on the latest Victorian climate science. It does not introduce new legal obligations but aims to assist businesses and councils to comply with existing duties and strengthen environmental resilience.

A webinar will be held on Thursday 6 November to outline the draft guidance and answer questions. Submissions can be made through the Engage Victoria website until 3 December 2025.

Further details, including the draft guidance, webinar registration and submission portal, are available on the [Engage Victoria website](#).

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## Expressions of Interest Open for Victorian Energy Upgrades Industry Reference Group

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The Essential Services Commission (ESC) is inviting expressions of interest from industry participants to join a new Industry Reference Group (IRG) for the Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) Program.

The IRG will provide a formal platform for engagement between the ESC and key stakeholders across the energy efficiency and upgrades sector. The group will help strengthen communication, improve understanding of industry obligations and consumer rights, and contribute to better consumer and environmental outcomes under the program.

The initiative aligns with the ESC's 2025–29 Strategic Plan, which commits to enhancing collaboration with industry while promoting the long-term interests of Victorian consumers through effective regulation and energy market reform.

Applicants can nominate to join as either a member or associate member of the IRG. Further details, including eligibility criteria and responsibilities, are outlined in the group's Terms of Reference.

Applications close at 5:00 pm on Friday, 31 October 2025.

To apply or learn more, visit the [Essential Services Commission website](#).

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## Action Taken Against Two Businesses for Non-Compliant Energy Efficiency Upgrades

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The Essential Services Commission (ESC) has taken enforcement action against two accredited businesses under the Victorian Energy Upgrades (VEU) Program for allegedly claiming

certificates for ineligible energy efficiency upgrades.

The VEU Program supports Victorian households and businesses to reduce energy use and greenhouse gas emissions by providing financial incentives for accredited providers to deliver approved energy-saving activities.

An ESC investigation found that contractors working for two accredited businesses had installed pre-rinse spray valves that did not comply with VEU program rules. The upgrades involved modifying taps with customised fittings that allowed two spray valves per tap, making the installations ineligible for certificate creation.

Following the investigation, the Commission:

- Refused registration of 13,879 certificates—valued at nearly \$1.2 million—submitted by one business;
- Refused registration and accepted the withdrawal of 1,083 certificates, valued at more than \$92,000, from another; and
- Issued formal warnings to both businesses, reminding them of their obligations under the VEU Code of Conduct.

The ESC stated that pre-installing customised fittings misrepresents the greenhouse gas savings achieved and undermines program integrity. The breaches were identified following tip-offs about a rise in non-compliant spray valve installations.

The Commission has reinforced that accredited VEU providers must ensure all installations meet technical and program requirements and operate in a professional, ethical manner in line with the VEU Code of Conduct.

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## **EPA Takes Enforcement Action Over Alleged Illegal Waste Activities in Diamond Creek**

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EPA Victoria has taken enforcement action over the alleged unlawful acceptance and disposal of industrial waste at two properties on Black Gully Road, Diamond Creek. The ongoing regulatory response includes court proceedings, fines, and clean-up orders aimed at addressing improper waste management and ensuring compliance with environmental laws.

Following an earlier investigation into alleged construction and demolition waste being accepted and stored without the required environmental permissions, one site owner is due to appear before the Heidelberg Magistrates' Court on 29 October 2025, facing multiple charges for operating without authorisation and failing to comply with an EPA-issued notice to classify and remove the waste.

At a neighbouring site, EPA has issued two infringement notices totalling \$20,352 for failing to provide information and documentation in relation to the alleged unlawful waste acceptance activities. The agency has also issued an information-gathering notice and a clean-up notice, directing that waste materials be properly managed and removed.

EPA officers continue to monitor and investigate both sites, warning that further enforcement action will follow if compliance obligations are not met.

The actions form part of EPA Victoria's broader commitment to enforcing the Environment Protection Act 2017 and maintaining strong oversight of waste management practices across the state.

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## **EPA Enforces Dairy Effluent Compliance Following Creek and River Pollution Incidents**

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EPA Victoria has issued fines and improvement notices to two separate dairy operators in South Gippsland and Lang Lang after inspections revealed effluent and silage leachate discharges into nearby waterways. The actions form part of a targeted compliance campaign focusing on dairy effluent management and drainage practices across the region.

In one case, EPA officers found dairy effluent and silage leachate entering Lamont Creek, resulting in a \$10,176 fine under Section 115 of the *Environment Protection Act 2017*. Inspectors observed two effluent ponds near the milking pad, one nearly full and another overflowing just 30 metres from the creek. Additional non-compliance issues included a silage pit draining leachate into the creek, unbunded fuel tanks, and waste materials stored too close to the waterway.

In a separate inspection in Lang Lang, EPA officers discovered effluent flowing into the Lang Lang River via a culvert connected to an effluent pump system. The operator was fined \$2,035 and issued an Improvement Notice requiring expert assessment of the effluent management system and installation of interim controls to prevent further discharges.

Both fines were issued under Section 115 of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* for the deposit of more than 1,000 litres of effluent into waterways. In each case, operators were also issued with Improvement Notices directing them to implement measures to prevent future pollution incidents.

The EPA has reiterated that dairy operators are legally responsible for managing effluent and silage systems to prevent environmental harm. Improper waste management can result in significant penalties, impact

local water quality, and harm aquatic ecosystems.

EPA Victoria has stated it will continue monitoring dairy effluent practices and undertaking enforcement action where pollution risks are identified.

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## **EPA Fines Concrete Operator for Alkaline Wastewater Discharge**

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EPA Victoria has fined a concrete manufacturer \$4,070 after highly alkaline wastewater was found flowing from its Port Melbourne premises into a stormwater drain leading toward the Yarra River.

During an inspection, EPA officers observed concrete slurry escaping from the site on Boundary Street and entering the drainage system. Testing confirmed the wastewater had a pH above 10, indicating high alkalinity. EPA determined the discharge posed a risk to the surrounding environment due to its corrosive and harmful properties.

Under Victorian environmental law, only clean rainwater may be discharged into stormwater systems. The incident was considered a breach of the *Environment Protection Act 2017* due to the potential for pollution and ecological harm.

EPA Victoria continues to remind all operators handling concrete, slurry or washout materials to have appropriate containment, treatment, and disposal systems in place to prevent runoff from entering drains or waterways.

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## **EPA Fines Sunbury Property Occupier for Illegal Burning of Industrial Waste**

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EPA Victoria has fined the occupier of a Sunbury property \$10,175 after inspectors found industrial waste being burnt on-site during a recent inspection.

The action followed community reports of smoke and truck movements at the Riddell Road property, where EPA officers confirmed the presence of industrial waste and soil that had been transported to the site. Evidence of recent burn-offs was also identified.

In addition to the fine, EPA has issued an Environmental Action Notice requiring the immediate cessation of waste acceptance and burning, and the removal of all industrial waste by 30 January 2026.

The Victorian Civil and Administrative Tribunal (VCAT) has also ordered that all waste-related activities at the site must cease following separate action by Hume City Council, in response to ongoing community concerns.

Under the *Environment Protection Act 2017* and the *Infringements Act 2006*, the occupier retains the right to request a review or have the infringement considered by a court.

EPA Victoria has reiterated that burning or accepting industrial waste without appropriate authorisation is unlawful and poses serious risks to both human health and the environment.

preparedness in the event of a spill or fire.

EPA officers examined measures such as bunding, material separation, spill containment, fire suppression systems and drain protection to ensure operators were taking adequate steps to prevent harm to the environment and community.

The operation has revealed ongoing gaps in operator awareness of environmental obligations under Victoria's General Environmental Duty (GED), which requires all businesses to take reasonable action to prevent and minimise environmental harm.

EPA Victoria will review the outcomes of the inspections and determine any follow-up actions, which may include the issue of improvement notices or further enforcement where risks are identified.

The EPA continues to remind all facilities handling flammable, reactive or hazardous materials to review their controls regularly and ensure compliance with environmental and safety obligations.

by 2030, with many regional facilities also nearing their limits.

The plan follows public consultation and identifies the immediate priorities to address residual waste, recycling and recovery needs. Key initiatives include:

- Streamlined planning processes for waste and recycling facilities, while maintaining environmental safeguards;
- Establishing a waste infrastructure concierge to provide planning and approvals support;
- Creating an independent Strategic Waste Infrastructure Advisory Committee; and
- Updating the Energy from Waste framework, clarifying where facilities using world's best practice thermal treatment technologies may be developed.

The updated Energy from Waste settings, released alongside the plan, recognise the role of advanced treatment technologies as an alternative to new landfills. More than 2,000 similar facilities operate internationally, helping reduce landfill reliance and recover energy from non-recyclable materials.

Future chapters of the Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan will focus on regional and rural waste challenges, as well as reuse and recycling infrastructure development, with further consultation expected later this year.

The plan complements recent policy measures, including food and organics recycling legislation passed earlier in 2025, which aim to increase recycling rates and reduce pressure on landfill systems.

Chapter 1 of the NSW Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan and related materials are available by visiting <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/Your-envir>

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### EPA Conducts Snap Inspections of Western Melbourne Warehouses Handling Dangerous Goods

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EPA Victoria has conducted a series of unannounced inspections at warehouses and logistics facilities in Melbourne's western suburbs as part of a compliance program targeting the storage and handling of dangerous goods.

The inspections, undertaken by the EPA West Metropolitan Regional team on 22 October 2025, covered 15 sites across Altona, Derrimut, Tottenham and Laverton. The operation aimed to assess how facilities store hazardous materials and their level of

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### NEW SOUTH WALES

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### NSW Releases First Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan

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The NSW Government has released the first chapter of the NSW Waste and Circular Infrastructure Plan, outlining a long-term strategy to prevent a looming waste capacity crisis and support the state's transition to a circular economy.

This marks the first time NSW has developed an integrated waste and circular infrastructure plan, designed to ensure the state has the facilities needed to manage waste from a growing population. Without new investment, Greater Sydney is projected to run out of landfill capacity

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## EPA and Infrastructure NSW Develop Sustainable Construction Policy

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The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), in partnership with Infrastructure NSW, is developing a Protection of the Environment Policy (PEP) for Sustainable Construction to promote low-carbon design and increased use of recycled materials in NSW public infrastructure projects.

The proposed policy will establish a reporting framework requiring NSW government agencies to provide the EPA with information on:

- Actions taken under the Decarbonising Infrastructure Delivery Policy;
- The extent to which recycled materials were prioritised at the procurement stage, using an 'if not, why not' reporting approach; and
- The types and quantities of recycled materials used during construction.

The draft PEP will operate alongside the State Environmental Planning Policy (Sustainable Buildings) 2022 and is intended to help reduce embodied carbon in public construction while advancing circular economy outcomes across the infrastructure sector.

The EPA has undertaken targeted consultation with government agencies and industry to refine the policy framework. A public exhibition of the draft PEP was held in April 2025, and the EPA is currently reviewing stakeholder submissions to determine whether changes are required before finalising the policy for implementation.

Once made, the PEP will form part of the state's broader strategy to reduce emissions from infrastructure delivery and encourage sustainable construction practices across NSW.

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## Consultation Opens on Draft Product Lifecycle Responsibility Regulation

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The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has released the draft Product Lifecycle Responsibility Regulation and Regulatory Impact Statement (RIS) for public consultation. The draft Regulation establishes the legal framework for a proposed mandatory product stewardship scheme for batteries supplied in New South Wales.

The Regulation aims to address the growing risks and environmental impacts of end-of-life lithium-ion batteries, which are responsible for an estimated 10,000 fires each year in waste collection trucks and facilities across Australia. Damaged or improperly disposed batteries can enter thermal runaway, creating fires that are difficult to extinguish and pose significant risks to public safety, waste infrastructure, and the environment.

Under the proposed scheme, brand owners supplying batteries in NSW will be required to take responsibility for the environmental and health impacts of their products across their full lifecycle — from design and manufacture through to disposal and recycling.

Key proposed requirements include:  
For brand owners:

- Becoming a member of a Product Stewardship Organisation (PSO) with an agreement in place with the EPA.
- Notifying the PSO and keeping records of the number and weight of regulated batteries supplied into NSW.

For Product Stewardship Organisations:

- Developing and publishing an action plan that details how they will meet the regulation's requirements and their agreement with the EPA.
- Keeping records and providing quarterly and annual reports on performance and financial measures.

The draft Regulation was developed following consultation with industry, local government, environment groups, and community stakeholders. It represents one of the first steps toward implementing mandatory product stewardship for batteries in Australia, positioning NSW as a national leader in managing hazardous end-of-life products.

Feedback is sought on the proposed regulatory requirements, action plan scope, and implementation timelines.

Submissions on the draft Regulation and RIS are now open. Further details and consultation documents are available on the [Draft Product Lifecycle Responsibility Regulation website](#).

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## NSW EPA Seeks Feedback on Updated Landfill Guidelines

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The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) is inviting councils, industry and the public to comment on updated Environmental Guidelines for Solid Waste Landfills, which set the minimum standards for landfill design, operation and rehabilitation across the state.

The revised draft aims to strengthen environmental protection, improve landfill performance and ensure long-term resilience of waste infrastructure. The Guidelines are used by the EPA to inform regulatory decisions under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*,

covering both council-run and privately operated facilities.

The proposed changes reaffirm existing requirements while introducing new measures that reflect national standards and international best practice. Updates include provisions for:

- Designing and constructing landfills to adapt to climate change impacts;
- Managing fire risks from batteries;
- Enhanced odour, leachate and contamination monitoring; and
- Improved protection of land, water and air quality.

The EPA noted that the update comes as Greater Sydney approaches landfill capacity limits, with waste volumes increasing alongside population growth. The review also seeks to modernise the guidelines, which were last comprehensively updated nearly a decade ago.

Feedback is sought on whether the new Guidelines are clear, practical and robust in meeting current and future waste management needs.

Submissions are open until 25 November 2025. Further information and the draft Guidelines are available at

<https://yoursay.epa.nsw.gov.au/draft-environmental-guidelines-solid-waste-landfills>.

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## **New Rules Allow Oyster Shell Waste to Be Reused on Agricultural Land**

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The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has introduced new rules allowing oyster shell waste to be safely reused on agricultural land in New South Wales. The change provides a practical solution for managing aquaculture waste while

supporting the state's circular economy goals.

Under the new framework, oyster shells can be processed, tested and applied to land to improve soil health and reduce acidity. The standards specify how shell waste must be dried, washed, crushed and mixed into topsoil, along with requirements for product testing to ensure safe reuse.

Each year, around 70 million oysters are produced across NSW for consumption and pearl production. Until now, most discarded shells were sent to landfill. The new rules enable oyster producers to repurpose shells as a soil conditioner, reducing waste volumes and creating value from a previously discarded resource.

The land application exemption was jointly developed by the Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD) and the NSW EPA, with funding support from the Local Land Services Early Needs Recovery Program. The initiative follows consultation with oyster growers seeking to reduce waste streams and enhance environmental outcomes.

The EPA is encouraging oyster farmers, landholders and agricultural producers to review the new standards and consider opportunities for reuse within approved guidelines.

Further information, including the current exemption details and technical requirements, is available at [Current orders and exemptions | EPA](#).

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## **New NSW Water Management Regulations Commence**

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The NSW Water Management (General) Regulation 2018 has been replaced by two new regulations - the Water Management (General) Regulation 2025 and the Water Management (Water Supply Authorities) Regulation 2025 - which

came into effect on 1 September 2025.

The changes were made as part of the staged repeal process under the *Subordinate Legislation Act 1989*, which requires NSW regulations to be reviewed and remade every five years to ensure they remain current and effective. The remake supports the ongoing operation of the *Water Management Act 2000*.

Most provisions from the 2018 Regulation have been retained; however, the new regulations introduce several updates designed to:

- Modernise administrative processes and improve customer experience by enabling more digital transactions and simplifying some requirements;
- Reduce regulatory burden through new approval exemptions;
- Strengthen environmental protections by refining or removing some previous exemptions; and
- Streamline and clarify provisions to improve understanding and compliance.

The Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water conducted a four-week public exhibition of the proposed regulations earlier this year. Feedback from industry, water users and community stakeholders informed the final versions. A 'What We Heard' report summarising submissions has been released.

The new regulations aim to improve transparency, reduce administrative complexity, and better support water management outcomes across NSW.

Further information, including the new regulations and consultation outcomes, is available by visiting: [Water Management Regulation Remake](#)

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## WaterNSW Shortlists Three New Sites for Potential Pumped Hydro Projects

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WaterNSW has identified three additional dam sites, Blowering, Burrendong and Hume, as potential locations for new pumped hydro energy storage projects, following pre-feasibility studies across its network of 41 dams.

The shortlisted sites were selected after assessments of terrain, geotechnical conditions, environmental factors and grid connection potential.

Further on-site investigations will now be undertaken, including geological surveys, environmental and cultural heritage assessments, mapping, and consultation with local landholders to determine their viability. The findings will inform whether any of the shortlisted sites should proceed to a commercial tender process to select private developers.

WaterNSW's long-duration storage initiative supports the NSW Government's renewable energy and emissions reduction targets, aiming to increase system reliability as more renewable generation enters the grid. The broader program could deliver up to 5.2 gigawatts (GW) of additional pumped hydro energy storage capacity to the NSW market by 2034.

Projects will be privately funded and operated, with WaterNSW retaining land ownership and water security responsibilities. Any approved developments will require comprehensive environmental assessment, community consultation, and formal planning approvals.

WaterNSW's Long Duration Storage Program builds on its existing Renewable Energy and Storage Program, which includes projects at Burrendong Dam, the Hunter Valley, and Lake Burragorang. These initiatives aim to strengthen grid stability, create regional economic

opportunities, and support the transition to a low-emission energy system.

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## Investigation Update on Debris Balls Incident Along NSW Coastline

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The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has confirmed that Sydney Water's Malabar Wastewater Treatment System is the likely source of the debris balls that washed ashore along several NSW beaches between October 2024 and February 2025.

The finding follows evidence gathered by Sydney Water under an EPA Preliminary Investigation Notice, which traced the origin of the debris to within the Malabar system. The EPA's Independent Wastewater Expert Panel reviewed the evidence in September 2025 and recommended that Sydney Water undertake further investigations to identify the exact cause and contributing factors within the system.

Sydney Water has now commenced this work, which will guide short-, medium- and long-term measures to prevent a similar incident in the future. The investigations are expected to be completed by the end of 2025.

The EPA has stated it will continue to oversee the investigation and work with Sydney Water to ensure that corrective actions are implemented and risks to the marine environment are reduced. Updates will be provided to the community as further information becomes available.

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## NSW EPA Announces Proposed Organisational Changes

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The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has announced proposed organisational changes aimed at strengthening its regulatory capability and ensuring a financially sustainable operating model.

According to EPA Chief Executive Officer Tony Chappel, the changes are designed to align the agency's structure with its expanding responsibilities under recently strengthened environmental protection laws. These include enhanced powers to prevent environmental harm, undertake prosecutions, and deliver new product stewardship initiatives.

The proposed reforms seek to rebuild specialist and high-risk regulatory capabilities, increase frontline compliance capacity, and enable field staff to focus on core inspection and enforcement functions. The changes are also intended to ensure that the EPA can continue to meet community expectations while operating within government budget requirements.

The EPA has indicated that it will work closely with staff throughout the process and provide support as the organisational changes are implemented.

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## QUEENSLAND

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### Development of Draft End of Waste (EOW) Codes

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The QLD Department of the Environment, Tourism, Science and Innovation is responsible for developing *end of waste (EOW) codes* under the Waste Reduction and Recycling Act 2011. These codes play a vital role in promoting resource recovery and reducing landfill by identifying when a waste material can be safely and lawfully used as a product.

Each year, the department invites submissions for the development of new EOW codes. While all proposed resource types are considered, the decision to develop a code rests with the department. Where a waste demonstrates properties comparable to a product and poses negligible environmental risks, the department may proceed to develop a draft EOW code.

To ensure technical accuracy and robust assessment, a technical

advisory panel may be established to assist in the code's development. Once a draft EOW code is prepared, it is released for public consultation, providing stakeholders and community members with the opportunity to comment on the proposed code before it is finalised.

The call for submissions is now open and will close at **5.00pm on 30 January 2026**.

Submissions can be made using the [Submission for Proposed End of Waste Code Form](#). Those seeking early guidance can use the [Application for Pre-lodgement Services Form](#) to request a meeting outside the submission period.

For further information or assistance in preparing a submission, contact **[RRS.Consultation@detsi.qld.gov.au](mailto:RRS.Consultation@detsi.qld.gov.au)** with 'EOW codes' in the subject line. Submissions received will help inform the future direction of EOW code development and support Queensland's transition toward a circular economy.

within three years of contract execution.

Eligible applicants include all Queensland councils, Regional Organisations of Councils, Councils of Mayors, and other entities representing council interests. Councils are encouraged to partner with other councils or the private sector to achieve shared regional outcomes and may participate in up to two projects across the streams.

Applications must be submitted through the department's [SmartyGrants](#) portal by **3.00pm, 11 December 2025** for Stream 1 and **3.00pm, 29 January 2026** for Stream 2.

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## **Resource Recovery Boost Fund: Supporting Queensland's Recycling Future**

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The Queensland Government has launched the **\$130 million Resource Recovery Boost Fund (RRBF)** to help councils strengthen waste reduction and recycling across the state. The fund aims to support projects that establish critical resource recovery infrastructure, reduce waste going to landfill, and increase recycling from household collections.

**Round 1** of the RRBF will provide \$60 million in funding through two streams:

- [Stream 1 \(Small projects\)](#): \$20 million for local or regional initiatives, with funding of up to \$2 million (excl GST) per project. Projects must be completed within 18 months of contract execution.
- [Stream 2 \(Major projects\)](#): \$40 million for large-scale projects delivering regional or statewide benefits. Funding exceeds \$2 million (excl GST), with delivery