

ENVIRONMENT NETWORK WEEKLY (ENW)

AEBN National ENW e-news – 12 July 2024

UPCOMING AEBN EVENTS

[AEBN Interactive Webinar]
[CONTAMINATED LAND: A Legal and Practical Approach to Risk Management associated with Contaminated Land](#)

10.00am to 3.00pm
24 July 2024

[AEBN Workshop Webinar]
[SERIES 1 to Dangerous Goods, Hazardous Substances/Chemicals and GHS](#)
(Interactive)

Covering: Regulatory framework, Changes to laws and requirements, Identification, Safety Data Sheets and more

10.00am to 1.45pm
18 Sept 2024

[AEBN Workshop Webinar]
[SERIES 2 to Dangerous Goods and Hazardous Substances/Chemicals](#)
(Interactive)

Covering: Safe Storage, Handling and Transport

10.00am to 1.45pm
19 Sept 2024

FEDERAL

Legislative changes to NGERs for 2024-25 reporting year

The Clean Energy Regulator has announced amendments to the National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting (NGER) Scheme legislation.

Just to note, these amendments do not affect reports due by 31 October 2024 for the 2023-24 reporting year.

The amendments are the first stage of the Federal Government's response to the Climate Change Authority's 2023 review of the NGER legislation.

Except for those amendments phasing out Method 1 for estimating fugitive methane emissions from the extraction of coal from open-cut mines, the **updates commence on 1 July 2024** and apply to the 2024-25 financial year and subsequent years. **This will affect NGER scheme reports due by 31 October 2025.** Amendments phasing out the use of Method 1 for estimating fugitive methane emissions from open-cut coal mines **commence progressively from 1 July 2025.**

The amendments:

- introduce a staggered phase out of the use of Method 1 for estimating fugitive methane emissions from the extraction of coal from open-cut mines covered by the Safeguard Mechanism from 1 July 2025;
- add a Method 2B for the estimation of fugitive methane and carbon dioxide emissions from flaring of gas in natural gas production, providing a mass balance approach;

- update Method 2 for the estimation of fugitive methane emissions from produced formation water occurring in oil or gas operations, to reflect onsite operations where the water has not been exposed to atmosphere and where facilities capture and recycle methane back into the gathering line rather than allowing it to dissolve into the resource pond and leak into the atmosphere;
- correct the categorisation of specified instances of Method 1 for estimating emissions of methane from natural gas venting activities that are consistent with Method 2 requirements;
- update Method 2 for the estimation of fugitive emissions of greenhouse gases from the injection of a greenhouse gas into a geological formation to align with Method 2 for onshore natural gas production;
- reinstate a method for estimating emissions of methane from mud de-gassing activities during oil or gas exploration and development;
- enable the market-based reporting of scope 1 emissions from renewable liquid fuels when they are co-mingled with their fossil fuel equivalents and supplied through shared infrastructure;
- enable identification of circumstances in which there exists and overlap between a company's reported scope 1 and scope 2 emissions;
- introduce a reporting requirement for landfills reporting over 100 kilotonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent to provide an estimate of gross emissions from non-legacy waste;

- make other minor updates.

The amendments focus on areas identified in the review for further improvement where immediate action can be taken, specifically in relation to market-based reporting and enhancing the accuracy of reported fugitive methane emissions. The Federal Government's full response to the review, including on further action to enhance fugitive methane emissions estimation will be published once it is finalised.

Details of the amendments and accompanying explanatory statements are now available:

- [National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting Amendment \(2024 Measures No. 1\) Regulations 2024](#)
 - [Explanatory statement](#)
- [National Greenhouse and Energy Reporting \(Measurement\) Amendment \(2024 Update\) Determination 2024](#)
 - [Explanatory statement](#)

Proposed changes to Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) Determination 2013:

Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is seeking feedback on proposed changes to the *Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards (WELS) Determination 2013*.

The changes proposed will clarify the regulatory scope of the scheme and include references to new standards and codes.

The changes aim to make it easier to comply with requirements and to reduce regulatory burden.

Please read the following proposed amendments and provide [online feedback](#) by 5.00pm AEST, 31 July 2024.

- the Amendment to the [Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards](#)

[Determination 2013 \(No. 2\)](#)

- [Federal Register of Legislation - Water Efficiency Labelling and Standards](#) [Determination 2013 \(No. 2\)](#)

Illegal import of equipment containing synthetic greenhouse gas without a licence

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has issued, to a company, fines that total \$465,480 for importing electrical switchgear containing synthetic greenhouse gas without a licence.

Investigators from the Department and the Australian Border Force (ABF) found that the Australian arm of a multi-national company imported equipment containing sulphur hexafluoride (SF6), the most potent synthetic greenhouse gas, without a licence.

It is illegal to import equipment containing a scheduled substance like SF6 without a licence under both the [Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act 1989](#) and the *Customs Act 1901*. Greenhouse gases contribute to global warming. Australia regulates the import and handling of these types of gases to minimise their risk to the atmosphere and to assist Australia's tracking and reporting of greenhouse gases by imposing reporting obligations on licence holders.

The Department and ABF officers work closely to intercept imports at every major port in Australia and have done so between September 2023 and March 2024.

They seized approx \$3 million worth of equipment containing an estimated 517 kilograms of SF6, which if released to the atmosphere would have a climate impact equivalent to running nearly 5,000 cars for a year.

DCCEEW has lifted its capacity to respond to breaches of Australia's national environment laws and stands ready to take action against individuals and businesses who disregard them.

Commercial and Industrial refrigerants: Reducing greenhouse gas emissions:

Comment sought

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) is seeking your views on how the use of global warming potential (GWP) refrigerants in the commercial and industrial refrigeration sector can be reduced. The Department is looking at further measures to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through the *Ozone Protection and Synthetic Greenhouse Gas Management Act* (1989).

Options being considered include –

- restrictions on import and manufacture of new commercial refrigeration equipment using high GWP refrigerants, and
- restrictions on the import and use of R404A.

Feedback is expected to assist with the development of policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions and support Australia's commercial and industrial refrigeration industry.

Please reading the [consultation paper](#) and provide [online feedback](#) by 5.00pm (AEST), 8 August 2024.

Building Energy Performance report:

Released

The Federal Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW) has released the [Barriers to Building Energy Performance report](#) that analyses the performance of commercial buildings with below average energy performance ratings to identify drivers and barriers faced by building owners, managers, and assessors when improvements are being considered.

The report also analysed National Australian Built Environment Rating System (NABERS) energy data for 2000 offices and 370 shopping centres, focusing on buildings with a rating below 3 stars.

In the 2022-23 financial year, the national average rating for offices was 4.9 stars and shopping centres had an average 4.5-star rating.

Key findings from this analysis include that:

- the Commercial Building Disclosure (CBD) program successfully engages stakeholders who otherwise would not consider energy efficiency
- almost 40% of surveyed stakeholders of poor performing buildings were only NABERS rated due to mandatory disclosure.
- smaller buildings were more likely to have lower NABERS Energy ratings.
- almost 20% of all rated buildings and 57% of buildings smaller than 2000m², have never achieved a rating above 3 stars
- there is little incentive for some owners to invest in long-term energy performance improvements, as they can find tenants despite a low rating
- engaged and knowledgeable facilities managers play a crucial role in driving energy performance improvements
- buildings with an on-site building manager were statistically less likely to have poor energy performance.

Net Zero Sector Plans to include industry, resources and built environment sectors

The Federal Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR) is developing Australia's [Net Zero Plan](#) to articulate how major sectors will transition to a net zero economy by 2050. It is expected to set out government priorities, policies and measures to drive down emissions and support investment in low emissions and renewable activities.

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

(DCCEEW) is leading this work in coordination with DISR and other departments.

Six sectoral emissions reduction plans will support the Net Zero Plan. DISR is developing 3 of these plans:

- **Industrial sector plan** – to focus on subsectors that represent the need for decarbonisation, and most impacted by the economy's transition to net zero.

The Industrial sector plan will cover:

- alumina and aluminium
- waste and resource recovery
- chemicals and plastics
- iron and steel
- cement and concrete
- food and beverages
- pulp and paper
- manufacturing
- metals refining and smelting
- synthetic greenhouse gases.

- **Resources sector plan** – this plan will cover:

- oil and gas extraction and processing
- liquefied natural gas (LNG) liquefaction
- coal mining
- mining of metals and non-metal minerals
- on-site processing of ores
- resource exploration and support services.

- **Built environment sector plan**

The built environment encompasses buildings, structures, parks and water infrastructure. This includes around 11 million private dwellings and 1 million commercial buildings across Australia.

The plan will take a holistic approach to emissions reduction in the built environment. This includes reducing:

- emissions associated with operating buildings (for example, heating, cooling and lighting)

- embodied emissions in the construction material used in buildings.

The Plan will focus on ensuring Australia has a liveable and resilient built environment and an equitable transition to net zero.

The 3 Sector Plans will consider any cross-cutting and sector-specific issues. These include:

- valuing emissions reduction
- removing blockers to action
- growing social equity through the transition
- working internationally.

The Sectoral Plans will also consider key enabling technologies to support emissions reductions or removals.

Future Gas Strategy:

Released

The Federal Department of Industry, Science and Resources has released the [Future Gas Strategy](#), that provides the Federal Government's plan for how gas will support the Australian economy's transition to net zero in partnership. The strategy explains the principles that the Federal Government will use to guide policymaking about gas to support the transition to net zero.

The strategy's objectives are to:

- support decarbonisation of the Australian economy
- safeguard energy security and affordability
- entrench Australia's reputation as an attractive trade and investment destination
- help our trade partners on their own paths to net zero.

This strategy is supported by the [Future Gas Strategy Analytical Report](#), and provides the Federal Government's assessment of the latest available evidence.

Green Metals: A Future Made in Australia

Comment sought

The Federal Department of Industry, Science and Resources has released a consultation paper on [Green Metals – A Future Made in Australia: Unlocking Australia's Green Iron, Steel, Alumina and Aluminium Opportunity](#) for your feedback.

The Department has identified green metals as a priority industry for a Future Made in Australia, specifically the production of low emissions iron, steel, alumina and aluminium.

The Department is seeking to understand what the barriers are to decarbonising the production of green metals. The Department also seeks to know what would encourage new investment in these sectors.

Feedback received is expected to guide policy development to support an Australian green metals industry and contribute to a Future Made in Australia. Insights from the consultation will also inform the Federal Government's Net Zero Plan, including the Industrial Sector Plan. This Plan will consider the opportunities and barriers to decarbonising metals production.

Please provide feedback via the [online survey](#) by 14 July 2024.

Draft guidance on Removal of oil and gas property and sea dumping of infrastructure in Commonwealth waters:

Comment sought

The offshore decommissioning of oil and gas operations involves removing or satisfactorily dealing with the property and infrastructure. Decommissioning must be timely, safe and environmentally responsible.

The Federal Government has released for comment the draft guidance – [Draft Australian Government guidance for removal of oil and gas property and sea dumping of infrastructure in Commonwealth waters outlines](#) - the

types of property and infrastructure that cannot be left in the sea. Offshore decommissioning of oil and gas operations involves removing or satisfactorily dealing with the property and infrastructure. Decommissioning must be timely, safe and environmentally responsible.

The draft guidance includes the types of property and infrastructure that may be permitted to be left in the sea, in limited circumstances.

The draft guidance clarifies:

- how Australia's offshore decommissioning and sea dumping frameworks connect;
- the application and assessment considerations when an oil and gas titleholder is seeking permission to leave property or infrastructure in place.

The guidance follows the *Offshore Petroleum and Greenhouse Gas Storage Act 2006* and the *Environment Protection (Sea Dumping) Act 1981*.

The 3 entities that are responsible for the draft guidance are the:

- Department of Industry, Science and Resources (DISR)
- Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water (DCCEEW)
- National Offshore Petroleum Safety and Environmental Management Authority (NOPSEMA).

Please provide [online feedback](#) by 19 July 2024 to inform the draft guidance content.

ACCC interim Inquiry report into gas supply arrangements in Australia:

Released

The Australian Competition and Consumer Commission's (ACCC) has released the [20th interim report of the ACCC inquiry into gas supply arrangements in Australia](#).

The ACCC is continuing its focus on the operation of the East Coast Gas Market.

The 20th interim report provides an update on forecast gas supply and demand, gas prices and gas availability in the East Coast Gas Market to support decision-making.

The ACCC has drawn information from commercial and industrial gas users, in addition to data on prices and supply, to provide insights on supply and interactions in the market.

The ACCC projects that there will be sufficient supply to meet demand for gas in the east coast in 2024 to 2026. As in recent years, the southern states (New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, and Tasmania) will be reliant on gas from Queensland and LNG producers will need to commit more gas to the east coast market and/or gas be drawn from storage to meet seasonal variations in demand.

Resources and energy quarterly – June 2024

Released

The Federal Department of Industry, Science and Resources has released the [Resources and energy quarterly – June 2024](#) (REQ) that provides the Office of the Chief Economist's forecasts for the value, volume and price of Australia's major resources and energy commodity exports.

The quarterly report provides:

- a 2-year outlook for global commodity prices, demand and supply
- up-to-date global production and consumption data
- forecasts for Australian production, exports, volumes and prices of key resources and energy commodities
- reviews of relevant topics and issues, such as the outlook for China and the value of the battery supply chain
- detailed statistical tables.

National Battery Strategy

The Federal Department of Industry, Science and Resources has released the [National Battery Strategy](#) which is a key part of the Federal Government's *Future Made in Australia* agenda.

The strategy outlines how the Federal Government will support the domestic battery industry as it grows and how it will create a diverse and competitive Australian battery industry.

Water heaters Version 53: Open for Applications

The Clean Energy Regulator has opened applications to list product models for Version 53 of the [register of solar water heaters](#).

The register lists all eligible solar water heater and air source heat pump models that can create small-scale technology certificates. This is under the [Small-scale Renewable Energy Scheme](#).

Manufacturers and importers must submit applications through the [Client Portal](#). New applicants can [create an account](#). Please refer to the [register of solar water heaters application process](#) for further information.

Applications for Version 53 close at 5.00pm (AEST) on 1 August 2024. See the timetable of the [2024 application rounds](#).

Market brief for Capacity Investment Scheme (CIS) Tender 2:

To open mid-July 2024

The Federal Government has released a [market brief](#) for the [Capacity Investment Scheme \(CIS\) Tender 2](#), which will focus on projects in the WA Wholesale Electricity Market (WEM).

Tender 2 is expected to open mid-July 2024 and will seek bids for clean dispatchable capacity projects in the WEM.

The tender will target 500 MW of 4-hour equivalent (or 2,000 MWh) dispatchable capacity.

The market brief provides an overview of the key design elements of the tender, including the proposed eligibility and merit criteria.

The WA electricity sector is undergoing rapid transformation and requires significant investment in new generation and storage capacity.

Through the CIS, the Federal Government will seek competitive tender bids for renewable capacity and clean dispatchable capacity projects to:

- deliver an additional 32 GW of capacity by 2030
- deliver the Australian Government's 82% renewable electricity by 2030 target.

AEMO Services Limited will manage the CIS tender 2 process on behalf of the Australian Government. The Federal Government will run CIS tenders every six months between 2024 to 2027.

New chair of Climate Change Authority appointed

The Federal Government has appointed the Hon. Matt Kean to the position of Chair, [Climate Change Authority](#) (CCA).

The CCA is an independent statutory body. It advises Federal Government on climate change policy.

Mr Kean's appointment follows the resignation of Mr Grant King.

Mr Kean is a former NSW Treasurer and Minister for Energy and Environment. He has been a proponent for climate action throughout his career.

VICTORIA

Circular Economy Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plan

Recycling Victoria has released the first [Circular Economy Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plan](#) (CERCC Plan), following approval by the Victorian Environment Minister.

The CERCC Plan is the first of its kind in Australia and brings together government and industry in a shared commitment to provide Victorians with greater confidence in the resilience and reliability of waste, recycling, and resource recovery services as we transition to a stronger circular economy.

The CERCC Plan identifies and manages risks of disruption to essential waste, recycling, and resource recovery services in Victoria, and ensures that contingency plans are developed and implemented by industry to minimise the impact of any serious disruptions to service delivery.

This new regulatory approach supports greater understanding, visibility and oversight of sector-wide risk planning. It will also enable shared management of risks by industry and government to reduce disruptions and make the system more resilient and reliable. Essential waste, recycling and resource recovery service providers can self-assess whether they are a responsible entity using the CERCC Plan and the [guidelines available](#).

Responsible entities have until 11:59pm on 8 July 2024 to notify the Head, Recycling Victoria of their status and then required to prepare and submit a Responsible Entity Risk, Consequence and Contingency Plan by 30 September 2024.

Recycling Victoria will provide support to the sector on how to assess their obligations and meet the requirements of the CERCC Plan.

Recycling Victoria's *Data Hub* provides up to date information on recycling vs landfill

Recycling Victoria has made available, through the [Data Hub](#) tool, new data from local government, and the waste and recycling sector.

The Data Hub tool currently shows that Victorian households are increasing their recycling with a higher landfill diversion rate than the national average. This has been supported by increased access to food organics and garden organics (FOGO) collections, with more than half of all Victorian councils now having access to a FOGO service.

Action towards landfill redirection remains a priority, with a range of programs underway including household recycling reforms, the container deposit scheme, Waste to Energy scheme, and investments in increased recycling and resource recovery infrastructure.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITY: Large Energy User Electrification Support Program

The Victorian Department of Energy, Environment and Climate Action (DEECA) is supporting large energy users through the [Large Energy User Electrification Support Program](#) that aims to drive electrification in industry, reduce energy use, emissions and energy costs, and build industry capability.

Sustainability Victoria will deliver will administer the Program. The Program will provide funding for approved specialists to complete electrification feasibility assessments (Projects) for eligible Victorian commercial and industrial business facilities that use between 10 and 100 terajoules of gas per annum.

[Details](#) are now available. Applications close on 30 September 2024, unless funding is exhausted earlier.

Victorian Energy Market Report for June 2024

The Essential Services Commission has released the quarterly [June 2024 Victorian Energy Market Report \(VEMR\) \(PDF\)](#) that covers the period from 1 January to 31 March 2024.

The VEMR aims to help customers understand how the energy retail market works and what they need to do to get the best out of it. It also highlights key compliance and enforcement outcomes delivered by the commission in the reporting period.

The [June 2024 VEMR \(PDF\)](#) provides the latest statistics on customers experiencing payment difficulty, wrongful disconnections and disconnections for non-payment. It also highlights energy market entries and exits and provides an analysis of current GreenPower offers.

Victorian Water Businesses receive approval for 2024-24 water prices

Victoria's 16 water businesses have received the water prices to apply in 2024–25 by the Essential Services Commission.

Typical water bills will generally rise in line with inflation over 2024–25. Average bills for owner-occupier households are set to rise, after inflation, by around \$33 (3%) in Melbourne and by around \$50 (4%) in regional Victoria.

The commission's Executive Director of Price Monitoring and Regulation Marcus Crudden says water bills vary depending on factors such as water usage, changes in borrowing costs and inflation.

NEW SOUTH WALES

Former landfill at St Peters declared significantly contaminated

NSW EPA has declared 'significantly contaminated' a former landfill site at St Peters in Sydney's Inner West, as part of the St Peters Interchange. This is in response to ongoing detections of elevated methane and carbon dioxide levels at the site.

The declaration allows for improved long-term oversight of the Interchange by NSW EPA and will ensure the site is appropriately remediated for future use, including community use.

The site has a long industrial history and operated as a landfill from 1988 to 2014.

NSW EPA will now work with Transport for NSW (TfNSW) on a Management Proposal which will outline the medium and long-term measures to be put in place under the declaration. This will include plans for ongoing investigation of gas emissions, remediation works and community engagement.

Hunter Water Regulation remake

The NSW Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water is seeking feedback on the remake of the *Hunter Water Regulation 2015*.

The objective of the regulation is to support Hunter Water in its role to provide services for:

- drinking water
- wastewater
- recycled water
- stormwater.

The regulation also empowers Hunter Water to implement water restrictions.

The regulation must be remade by 1 September 2024 to provide Hunter Water with the necessary authorisation's for carrying out its key functions under the [Hunter Water Act 1991](#).

Please provide [online feedback](#) by 14 July 2024.

QUEENSLAND

New QLD laws ban carbon capture and storage activities in Great Artesian Basin:

Effective 18 June 2024

Effective 18 June 2024, new QLD laws ban carbon capture storage (CCS) activities in the Queensland component of the Great Artesian Basin (GAB) to protect the basin's critical water resources.

On 12 June 2024, [Legislation](#) had passed in the QLD Parliament to ban greenhouse gas (GHG) storage activities, including CCS, and enhanced petroleum recovery activities using a GHG stream in the GAB.

The amendments end any existing and applied for tenures and associated environmental authorities for GHG storage or enhanced petroleum recovery activities using a GHG stream in the GAB, withdraw any existing applications and prevent future applications.

The amendments also mandate an environmental authority condition on existing authorities which prohibits enhanced petroleum recovery using GHG streams in the GAB. Further details of the amendments are available at [Greenhouse gas storage in Queensland | Department of Resources](#)

The legislative ban within the GAB follows the completion of a rigorous 3-year assessment under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* of the Carbon Transport and Storage Company Pty Limited's Surat Basin Carbon Capture and Storage Project. The assessment by Queensland environmental regulator determined that the proposal was not suitable to proceed due to potential impacts on groundwater resources in the GAB. The [final assessment report](#) for the CTSCo proposal is available online.

CCS and enhanced petroleum recovery activities using a GHG stream activities outside of the GAB may be able to continue in other parts of the State, subject to rigorous regulatory

assessment and approval processes. To support this, a Technical Expert Panel will review the safety aspects of GHG storage for areas outside the GAB.

ASBESTOS:

Reminder to transporters of asbestos contaminated soil AND Reminder to recycled aggregated producers

Reminder to transporters of Asbestos contaminated soil:

The QLD Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) advises that under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (EP Act), there are two frameworks that regulate the transport and disposal of asbestos. These are the **regulated waste framework** and the **contaminated soil framework**.

The nature of the material being transported and disposed will determine which framework applies.

A [recent update has been made to the information](#) that summarises when each framework applies and provides several examples for transporting asbestos.

What you need to know:

When transporting asbestos contaminated waste (including soil) under the **regulated waste framework**:

- An environmental authority (EA) for ERA 57 (Regulated Waste Transport) must be held.
- The vehicle transporting the waste must be recorded on the EA, for the duration that the vehicle is utilised for transportation of regulated waste. The department provides [Online Services](#) allowing operators to update vehicles recorded on their EA at any time.
- The conditions outlined in the EA specify the responsibilities of the transporter which must be complied with.

- Waste Tracking must be completed and submitted to the department in accordance with the requirements of the Environmental Protection Regulation 2019.

When transporting asbestos contaminated soil under the **contaminated soil framework**:

- A soil disposal permit must be held where contaminated soil is being removed from land listed on the Environmental Management Register or the Contaminated Land Register.
- All conditions in the soil disposal permit must be complied with.

It is important that all transporters are aware of their obligations and refer to the [legislation and the guidance available](#)

Further information relating to your obligations, when transporting asbestos contaminated waste, can be made to the department's Permits and Licensing team at palm@des.qld.gov.au.

Reminder to recycled aggregates producers:

The QLD Department of Environment, Science and Innovation (DESI) is advising Operators undertaking *Environmentally Relevant Activity (ERA) 54 – Mechanical Waste Reprocessing* Under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994 (EP Act)* play a crucial role in ensuring recycled products are fit for purpose and safe for consumers.

Preventing contamination of recycled products, particularly asbestos, through effective sorting, handling and segregation is essential to ensure the safety of Queenslanders.

The environmental regulator within the QLD Department of Environment Science and Innovation (DESI) along with the Office of Industrial Relations (OIR) recently completed an asbestos in mulch inspection program which identified several operators with insufficient controls to prevent asbestos from contaminating green waste. These operators were required to improve their surveillance, staff training, and waste redirection

procedures.

The environmental regulator has advised that it undertakes regular inspections across a number of industries, including checking that appropriate controls are in place and taking samples of final products. DESI advises that Operators at risk of receiving asbestos and asbestos contaminated material should ensure they review their procedures, training and resourcing to ensure asbestos can be detected early and re-directed away from the aggregate manufacturing and supply chain and is appropriately disposed of.

The environmental regulator has stated that it will take strong action against operators who fail to appropriately manage the risk of asbestos contamination in different waste industries.

Progress Report 2024 for Regulatory Strategy 2022-27: Released

The QLD Department of Environment, Science and Innovation has released the [Progress Report for 2024](#) for the Regulatory Strategy 2022-2027.

The Progress Report 2024 provides an update on the delivery of the action items and targets across the 6 focus areas during the second year of the [Regulatory Strategy 2022 – 2027: Queensland's Environmental Regulator](#) (the Regulatory Strategy).

The [Regulatory Strategy](#) outlines actions to be delivered by 2027 and is based on the principle of continuous improvement. The Regulatory Strategy includes a commitment that will be reviewed and reported on annually on its delivery of the focus area actions.

Implementation highlights include:

- **Powers and Penalty Review** -

An independent review into the adequacy of powers and penalties available under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* was published along with a Government response in May 2023. The review was initiated in part

due to the significant odour nuisance issues in the Swanbank industrial area and surrounds but has relevance to all of Queensland. It was conducted by retired Judge Richard Jones and Barrister Susan Hedge.

The review aimed to identify whether the tools available, particularly in relation to nuisance, are suitable to deal with the challenges of the future and make recommendations for improving the regulation of Queensland's environment.

The findings of the review and the Government response are [AVAILABLE ONLINE](#).

- On 11 June 2024, the Queensland Government passed the [Environmental Protection \(Powers and Penalties\) and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2024](#).

The new laws deliver stronger protections for communities impacted by environmental issues caused by operators. The changes will also give the environmental regulator additional tools to prevent environmental harm before it occurs.

New Draft Code of Practice for the release of stored water from privately owned farm storages to receiving waters to QLD Murray-Darling Basin:

Comment sought

The QLD Department of Environment, Science and Innovation is seeking your feedback on the following document:

- [Code of practice for the release of stored water from privately owned farm storages to receiving waters in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin 2024–31 Consultation Draft \(new draft Store and Release Code of Practice\)](#)

Key changes in the new draft Store and Release Code of Practice include simplifying monitoring requirements

and updating best management practice measures.

The draft Store and Release Code of Practice is accompanied by the [Explanatory Guide: To support consultation on the draft code of practice for the release of stored water from privately owned farm storages to receiving waters in the Queensland Murray-Darling Basin 2024–31](#).

The new draft Store and Release Code of Practice and its accompanying explanatory guide is expected to replace the previous version that expired on 17 December 2023.

Feedback is sought by 19 June 2024 to evinfo@des.qld.gov.au.

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Battery disposal concerns

A warning from EPA SA that batteries that are being placed in kerbside bins present a high fire risk.

It is critical that batteries are recycled or [disposed of correctly](#).

EPA SA is currently undertaking a review of the *Environment Protection (Waste to Resources) Policy 2010* (the EPP), with consultation set to open soon as a number of the key policy reform areas of the EPP are seeking to address this issue.

EPA SA is concerned of the increasing occurrence of fires in the resource recovery and waste sector as a result of vapes, consumer products with embedded batteries, and batteries being placed in roadside recycling or general waste bins.

At the recent national Environment Ministers' Meeting, Environment Ministers agreed to accelerate work towards reforming product stewardship arrangements for all batteries, acknowledging that intervention is needed through the entire lifecycle of a battery or battery-powered device.

This includes looking at options to improve the –

- design,
- packaging,
- importation,
- storage, and
- disposal of batteries.

Batteries can be recycled by taking them to a dedicated battery collection site, such as [B-cycle](#).

When batteries are recycled correctly, valuable materials like magnesium and zinc are recovered for use in new products. It also avoids having to mine these materials for new products and keeps toxic heavy metals, like cadmium, mercury and lead, out of landfill.

In the short term, EPA SA have also attended a State and Territory Battery Working Group to address the immediate and medium-term risks associated with the incorrect disposal of vapes and other lithium-ion embedded waste.

It's important that all South Australians dispose of this type of waste correctly through dedicated battery collection sites, and do not place them in kerbside waste or recycling bins.

Latest National Pollutant Inventory data released

The latest [National Pollutant Inventory \(NPI\)](#) data for 2022-2023 is now available, with 493 SA facilities providing reports for the 2022–23 reporting year.

Altogether, 4691 facilities from across Australia submitted NPI data for the 2022-23 year.

The NPI is an online database published by the Australian Government (Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water) containing information on the types and quantities of pollutants being emitted from a range of industrial, commercial, transport and household activities. This information is available to the community and businesses.

Personal radiation monitoring devices:

Information sheet

EPA SA has released the latest [information sheet](#) that discusses the use of approved personal radiation monitoring devices for radiation workers within SA.

A personal radiation monitoring device (PRMD) is a radiation sensor designed to measure, over a specified period of time, the radiation dose received by a person who is occupationally exposed to radiation.

The use of PRMDs in SA is governed by legislation under the *Radiation Protection and Control Act 2021 (RPC Act)* and the *Radiation Protection and Control Regulations 2022 (RPC Regulations)*. Both legislation are administered by the Radiation Protection Branch of the EPA SA.

Under Regulation 86, employers are required to issue an approved personal radiation monitoring device for each worker who will receive a radiation dose that exceeds: 1 2 under all foreseeable scenarios (including credible accident scenarios) – 1 mSv per year, or under low probability scenarios¹ – a dose limit set out in Regulation 85.

purchased in SA.

If the beverage container is covered by the Beverage Container Provisions of the EP Act, EPA approval is necessary before it is distributed or sold in SA. EPA SA may request the removal of containers from the retail trade and prohibit further sales and/or other enforcement action may be taken, if beverage containers offered for sale do not comply with the requirements of the Act.

Other updated guidelines released are:

- [Collection depots - reverse vending machine \(RVM\)](#)
- [Collection depot approval](#)
- [Super collector guidelines](#)

NEW GUIDELINE: Beverage Container Approval for Container deposit scheme

EPA SA has released the latest [guidelines on Beverage Container Approval – Container deposit scheme](#) to assist applicants in completing the online Application for approval of class of container.

The guideline has been prepared as a supplement to, and should be used in conjunction with, the online Application for approval of class of container, pursuant to section 68 of the Environment Protection Act 1993 (EP Act).

SA operates a container deposit scheme where a 10-cent refund is available on certain empty beverage containers when the beverage is