

Media Release

Environment Protection Authority



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EPA negotiates civil penalty

The Environment Protection Authority has successfully negotiated a civil penalty with AbiGroup Contractors Pty Ltd which relates to an incident at Lonsdale in September 2009.

A civil penalty is a regulatory provision provided for under the Environment Protection Act 1993 as an alternative to criminal prosecution. It enables the EPA to negotiate a civil penalty directly with an individual or corporation which has committed the offence, in this case causing material environmental harm.

The penalty relates to an incident where a pump was left unattended at the northern sediment basin at a construction site for the Adelaide Desalination Plant on Christie Road at Lonsdale between 7 pm on 2 September to 4.30 am on 3 September 2009.

Approximately 4.7 megalitres of turbid stormwater was discharged to the waters of Gulf St Vincent as a result of the pump being left unattended.

The turbid stormwater caused a visible brown plume of discoloured water.

EPA Deputy Chief Executive Tony Circelli said that the EPA was pleased that an agreement with AbiGroup had been reached in relation to this matter.

“AbiGroup have acknowledged that human error played a large part in this incident which caused turbid stormwater to flow into the sea.

“As South Australia’s leading environmental regulator it is our role to protect the local environment and to ensure Corporations are aware of their responsibility to have in place proper systems and procedures to avoid pollution incidents from occurring,” said Mr Circelli.

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