

Technical reporting requirements

Issued March 2017

EPA 1102/17: This explanatory note clarifies the technical reporting requirements of the Environment Protection Authority and provides greater transparency for water industry entities. It highlights the legislative and practical reasons for the requested data, explains how the data is used, and what benefit the data provides to the industry, customers and the environment

Introduction

This explanatory note has been developed as part of a joint project between South Australia's five water industry regulators: Officer of the Technical Regulator (OTR), Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Department for Health and Ageing (DHA), Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR) and Essential Services Commission of South Australia (ESCOSA).

The information below describes the regulatory reporting requirements for those water industry entities who have an environmental authorisation (in the form of a licence) under the *Environment Protection Act 1993* (EP Act) for activity 3(2) *Sewage Treatment Works or Septic Tank Disposal Schemes* and activity 4(2) *Discharge of Stormwater to Underground Aquifers*.

Requirements for wastewater treatment plants (WWTP)

On an annual basis, water industry entities have to report to the EPA on the following.

1 Licence annual returns and licence renewals

EPA licences are issued for a period of five (5) years. On the anniversary of a licence, an annual return must be submitted that includes the volume of wastewater and details of the licensee on the anniversary of the licence. This information is used to ensure the correct fee is applied and to ensure the licence is issued correctly.

On the expiry of an EPA licence a renewal must be submitted. This is in place of an annual return and includes the same reporting requirements. Information in a licence renewal may be used to inform a review of the conditions of licence to ensure they are appropriate for the activities at the site.

2 Fee discount applications

If a licensee applies for a fee discount, information must be provided to allow an assessment to determine if the licensee is eligible for a fee discount for the 12-month period. This information may include the volume of wastewater treated or reused, water quality, or any spills or overflows to the environment. To receive a fee discount it must be demonstrated that the activity includes an effective prescribed measure in accordance with the *Environment Protection Regulations 2009*.

3 Environmental monitoring

Wastewater treatment plants that are of higher risk or have a release to the environment may also be required to undertake monitoring and to submit a monitoring report to determine if there is impact to the environment. Monitoring is usually site specific and reflective of risk at the site. This monitoring is used to assess environmental impacts and to demonstrate compliance with licence conditions, Environment Protection Policies, and the EP Act.

4 Incident notification

Under section 83 of the EP Act persons must notify the EPA where serious or material environmental harm is caused or threatened. Notification of incidents is required to assess the environmental impact, to assess compliance as described above, and to inform any regulatory action. This may include the volume or amount of discharge, water quality or impact to the receiving environment.

Requirements for managed aquifer recharge (MAR)

1 Licence annual returns and licence renewals

EPA licences are issued for a period of five (5) years. On the anniversary of a licence, an annual return must be submitted that includes the volume of water injected and details of the licensee on the anniversary of the licence. This information is used to ensure the correct fee is applied and to ensure the licensee is issued correctly.

On the expiry of an EPA licence a renewal must be submitted. This is in place of an annual return and includes the same reporting requirements. Information in a licence renewal may be used to inform a review of the conditions of licence to ensure they are appropriate for the activities at the site.

2 Annual reporting

The EPA and DEWNR have worked together to develop a combined reporting template for MAR operators. This template includes injection volume, water quality, and an exceedance register. It is a condition of licence that this information is submitted annually to the EPA. This information is used to assess compliance against licence conditions, Environment Protection Policies, and the EP Act.

Extraction volume and aquifer pressure are included in this reporting as required by DEWNR.

There is the potential to share high-level information to contribute to the development of industry standards, learnings, and experiences of risks to shape future regulation and application of the precautionary principle.

3 Incident notification

Incidents such as exceedances of water quality criteria may need to be reported to the EPA in accordance with licence conditions. This may include details of the exceedance, why it occurred, actions to control the incident, and actions to prevent such an incident occurring in the future. As mentioned above this information is used to assess compliance and to inform future regulation and best practice in the industry.

Further information

Legislation

[Online legislation](#) is freely available. Copies of legislation are available for purchase from:

Service SA Government Legislation Outlet
Adelaide Service SA Centre
108 North Terrace
Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: 13 23 24
Facsimile: (08) 8204 1909
Website: <shop.service.sa.gov.au>
Email: <ServiceSAcustomerservice@sa.gov.au>

General information

Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607
Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8204 2004
Facsimile: (08) 8124 4670
Freecall: 1800 623 445 (country)
Website: <www.epa.sa.gov.au>
Email: <epainfo@sa.gov.au>
