

Tuesday, 14 January 2020

Fine for illegal dumping in Spencer Gulf

A 48-year-old Port Pirie man has been fined \$2,000 for dumping more than 200 kg of scrap metal in Spencer Gulf to create artificial reefs for recreational fishing.

The Environment Protection Authority received a report in June 2019 that a man had approached a number of people looking for scrap metal to use in artificial reefs.

EPA A/Director Regulation, Stephen Barry, said the man was believed to be launching his boat from the Port Davis boat ramp near Port Pirie, leading EPA investigators to begin a two-month surveillance operation.

“We were able to identify the boat, then locate two disposal sites about 6 km offshore, in 8 m of water,” Mr Barry said.

“When we initially interviewed the boat owner, he denied being involved in artificial reef creation, but when he was shown photographs of his boat filled with old television aerials, he admitted to disposing of litter in marine waters.

“In December, he was issued with a notice to remove and appropriately dispose of the aerials at his own cost by 17 January, and he has complied with this.

“We would like fishers to understand that they cannot simply create their own private reefs.

“Material like this breaks down over time, creating pollution and creating hazards for other boaties.

“Technology allows the EPA to undertake on- and offshore surveillance, and we will take action to protect the marine environment, issuing fines and clean-up notices like these.”

Under the *Local Nuisance and Litter Control Act 2016*, it is illegal to dispose of litter in marine waters.

The man was also charged \$120 in Victims of Crime Levy.