



# **Sector compliance report**

---

## **Chemical works**



# Chemical works

## Industry in South Australia



**37** total sites licensed by the EPA

**20** sites inspected (16 metro, 4 regional)

**17** recently inspected, inspection not required or not inspected due to location

## What we found

**261** total licence conditions assessed

**3** breaches of total licence conditions

**3** facilities had non-compliances

Most common environmental issues:

Inappropriate storage of chemicals

Bunding

Poor housekeeping

**98%** compliance with all licence conditions

## Compliance & enforcement outcomes



**3**

Non-compliance resolved during inspection



**16**

Licences require update conditions



**2**

Direction letters

## Introduction

This report presents the key findings of the EPA review of the compliance status of facilities licensed to undertake chemical works in South Australia.

Inspections were conducted on facilities undertaking 'Activity 1(2) Chemical Works' in accordance with Schedule 1 of the *Environment Protection Act 1993* (EP Act).

## Purpose of this report

This report can be used to understand the key compliance issues identified by the EPA and assist in improving the overall environmental performance of the sector.

Additionally, this report will provide the general community with information regarding the environmental compliance of businesses who are licensed to undertake chemical works.

## What are chemical works

The EPA currently licences 37 facilities to undertake chemical works activities as defined under the EP Act.

The activity of chemical works involves the manufacture of organic or inorganic material involving a chemical reaction, or salt production. For example fertiliser, pharmaceuticals or cleaning products.

The key environmental risks with those facilities who undertake chemical works are the impacts resulting from inappropriate storage of chemicals and stormwater contamination. Other environmental concerns from the activity are noise and odour impacts.

This sector includes facilities that manufacture organic or inorganic material involving a chemical reaction, or salt production. Schedule 1 of the EP Act defines chemical works as:

- (a) works with a total processing capacity exceeding 100 tonnes per year involving either or both of the following operations:
  - (i) manufacture (through chemical reaction) of any inorganic chemical, including sulfuric acid, inorganic fertilisers, soap, sodium silicate, lime or other calcium compound;
  - (ii) manufacture (through chemical reaction) or processing of any organic chemical or chemical product or petrochemical, including the separation of such materials into different products by distillation or other means;

OR

- (b) works with a total processing capacity exceeding 5,000 tonnes per year involving operations for salt production.

Inspections were undertaken on 20 of the 37 licensed chemical works sites in South Australia, to assess compliance against various licence conditions.

## Compliance and enforcement outcomes

EPA Authorised Officers inspected 20 licensed sites to assess compliance of their activities according to their licence conditions. In total, 261 licence conditions were assessed across the 20 inspected sites. This included eight sites which also undertake [chemical storage and warehousing](#).

The inspections identified the following non-compliance issues of minor environmental risk in relation to current licence conditions:

- **Inappropriate storage of chemicals (bundling):** Non-compliance involved small amounts of chemicals not being contained in an appropriate bund. If a container is spilled and chemicals are not contained, they may contaminate soil or possibly groundwater (for larger spills).
- **Poor housekeeping and lack of knowledge regarding licence conditions:** Breaches were of an administrative nature, such as registers not in place to capture complaints or maintenance of pollution control equipment. It is important for licensees to maintain registers to capture information over time in order to ensure they review the issues and make continuous improvements.

Following the inspections, two facilities received letters from the EPA that identified the breach/s of licence condition and/or GED, outlining action list and timelines required for the licensee to undertake in order to become fully compliant with their requirements. It is expected that all of these licensees will take actions to comply, to avoid further regulatory action.

The EPA also identified that 16 of the licensees require alterations to conditions which will lead to robust licence conditions that are easier to understand, more appropriate to the activity, and are consistent across the sector.

## Future actions

- All licensees are expected to undertake corrective action to ensure they comply with licence conditions.
- The EPA will continue to monitor these actions and licensees and take further regulatory action for any ongoing non-compliance.
- Conditions on many licences will be updated to assist to achieve greater consistency in regulation of chemical works.

---

## Further information

Environment Protection Authority

GPO Box 2607

Adelaide SA 5001

Telephone: (08) 8204 2004

Free call (country): 1800 623 445

Website: [www.epa.sa.gov.au](http://www.epa.sa.gov.au)

Email: [epainfo@sa.gov.au](mailto:epainfo@sa.gov.au)