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Reduced fees for olive processors

Olive processors that reuse wastewater instead of discharging it to sewer have gained fee reductions from the Environment Protection Authority (EPA).

As an interim measure while it conducts a review of its fee structure, the EPA has waived some licence fees for olive processors undertaking approved wastewater reuse.

Senior Environment Protection Officer Tim Gubbin said amendments to the EPA's licence fee structure would be considered during the review in order to promote the beneficial reuse of wastewater by olive processors.

"In the interim, olive processors can apply for the fee reduction where they can show that they are either reusing the water such as for sustainable irrigation, or supplying it to another licensed operator for sustainable reuse," he said.

"The opportunity to reduce fees is an incentive for businesses to operate more sustainably.

"Allowing partial fee relief now, while the legislative changes are being undertaken, gives the EPA a greater ability to promote use that is consistent with the waste management hierarchy, under which disposal of waste to sewer is the least preferable outcome."

On-site wastewater management needs to take into account potential impacts such as odour generation and effects on soils and groundwater.

The new arrangement will reduce licence fees for complying processors by about \$6,400 a year.

The EPA works with its licensees – about 2,500 businesses in South Australia – to reduce risks to the environment. This takes in private enterprises and government bodies, and covers activities from wine-making and curing meat to mining, manufacturing and the transport and processing of waste.

Licences or environmental authorisations have conditions to ensure that potential impacts and risks to the environment are minimised. All licensees are required to meet their environmental obligations through efficient and effective practices, and the EPA supports them to develop and adopt cleaner, more sustainable production technologies.

Licence fees help the EPA achieve cost recovery for its regulation of on-site activities and encourage improved practices.

Processors seeking further information can contact the EPA at EPACompliance2@sa.gov.au