



Central Coast Council

Pollution Incident Response Management Plan

EPL 1802 – South Sewage Treatment System

EPL 1942 – Bateau Bay Sewage Treatment System

EPL 2647 – North Sewage Treatment System

EPL 12633 – Mooney Mooney and Cheero Point Sewerage Scheme

EPL 12170 – Waters of Mangrove Creek Dam and Mooney Dam

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Pollution Incident Response Management Plan

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Testing History

(Please refer to earlier PIRMP versions for testing history prior in 2023)

Date of Testing	Method of Testing	Personnel Undertaking Testing
10/02/2023	Debrief- Storm Event	Team Leader Regulatory Compliance
4/22/2023	Debrief-SPS WGMJ	Team Leader Regulatory Compliance
24/04/2023	Desktop exercise – STP Power Outage	Team Leader Regulatory Compliance, STP Operators
14/11/2023	Desktop exercise – Chlorine Gas	Team Leader Regulatory Compliance, STP Operators
19/12/2023	Debrief – Discharge of supernatant from sludge lagoons at Wyong South STP whilst SPS WS07 was offline for maintenance.	Team Leader Regulatory Compliance

Terms and Definitions

Term	Definition
BCP	Business Continuity Plan
CIRMP	Critical Infrastructure Risk Management Program
CHIP	Corporate Hub and Information Portal (Council’s Intranet Page)
EMPLAN	Emergency Management Plan
EMS	Emergency Management System
EPA	Environment Protection Authority
EPL	Environment Protection Licence
Event	Abnormal occurrence that does not result in an incident or pollution incident
GIS	Geographical Information System
Immediately	Promptly and without delay
Incident	Unplanned event that causes or threatens harm to human health, the environment, plant, equipment, vehicles, property, security or infrastructure.
PIRMP	Pollution Incident Response Management Plan
Plan	Pollution Incident Response Management Plan
POEO (G) Regulation	Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2022
<i>POEO Act</i>	<i>Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997</i>
Pollution incident	An incident or set of circumstances during or as a consequence of which there is or is likely to be a leak, spill or other escape or deposit of a substance, as a result of which pollution has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur. It includes an incident or set of circumstances in which a substance has been placed or disposed of on premises, but it does not include an incident or set of circumstances involving only the emission of any noise.
PPE	Personal Protection Equipment

Relevant Authority	EPA, NSW Health (Public Health Unit), SafeWork NSW, Central Coast Council, Fire and Rescue NSW and NSW Food Authority (Shellfish Program)
SDS	Safety Data Sheet
SOCI	Security of Critical Infrastructure
SSP	Site Specific Plan
Stakeholders	A person, local community, occupiers of neighbouring properties, internal Council business units, group or organisation and other regulatory authorities (in addition to the abovementioned relevant authorities) which may be affected by a pollution incident.
SPS	Sewage Pump Station
STP	Sewage Treatment Plant
SWMS	Safe Work Method Statements
Waters	Any river, stream, lake, lagoon, swamp, wetlands, unconfined surface water, natural or artificial watercourse, dam or tidal waters (including the sea), or any water stored in artificial works, any water in water mains, water pipes or water channels, or any underground or artesian water.
WQMS	Water & Sewer Quality Management System

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1 INTRODUCTION

This Pollution Incident Response Management Plan (PIRMP) has been prepared by Central Coast Council (Council) to meet the requirements of the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997 (POEO Act)* and *Chapter 4 Protection of the Environment Operations (General) Regulation 2022* for Environment Protection Licences (EPL) 1802, 1942, 2647, 12170 and 12633 which relate to Council's water and sewer operations.

1.1 BACKGROUND

Central Coast Council covers an area of 1,680 square kilometres, encompasses 154 suburbs and has a total population of over 354,000 people. Council's water and sewer operations include 8 sewage treatment plants (STPs), a large network of sewage pumping stations (SPSs) and reticulation and water supply dams which operate under five EPLs.

This document consolidates all five EPLs of Council's water and sewer responsibilities into a single PIRMP.

1.2 OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the PIRMP are to:

- Ensure comprehensive and timely communication about a pollution incident to staff at the premises, the EPA, and other relevant authorities (Central Coast Council, NSW Health (Public Health Unit), SafeWork NSW, Fire and Rescue NSW, NSW Food Authority (Shellfish Program) and stakeholders outside the facility who may be affected by the pollution incident,
- Minimise and control the risk of a pollution incident at each facility, by identifying risks and developing planned actions to minimise and manage those risks, and
- Ensure the plan is properly implemented by trained staff, identify persons responsible for implementing it, and ensure that the plan is regularly tested for accuracy, currency, and suitability.

1.3 SCOPE

The PIRMP addresses how Council will manage pollution incidents causing or threatening material harm to the environment relating to the EPLs listed in Table 1:

Table 1 – EPLs included in this PIRMP

EPL	Premises	Inclusions	Location
1802	South Sewage Treatment System	Kincumber STP	Doyle Street Kincumber NSW 2251
		Woy Woy STP	Nagari Road Woy Woy NSW 2256
		The sewage reticulation system associated with Kincumber & Woy Woy STPs	
1942		Bateau Bay STP	The Entrance Rd

EPL	Premises	Inclusions	Location
	Bateau Bay Sewage Treatment System		Bateau Bay NSW 2261
		The sewage reticulation system associated with Bateau Bay STP	
2647	North Sewage Treatment System	Toukley STP	Wilfred Barrett Dr Noraville NSW 2263
		Wyong South STP	Ibis St Tuggerah NSW 2259
		Gwandalan STP	Summerland Point Rd Gwandalan NSW 2259
		Manning Park STP	Tall Timbers Rd Manning Park NSW 2259
		Charmhaven STP	Hiawatha Rd Woongarra NSW 2259
		The sewage reticulation system associated with Toukley, Wyong South, Gwandalan, Manning Park and Charmhaven STPs	
12170	Waters of Mangrove Creek Dam and Mooney Dam	Waters of Mangrove Creek Dam and Mooney Dam	Gosford NSW 2250
12633	Mooney Mooney and Cheero Point Sewerage Scheme	The sewage reticulation system within the Central Coast Council Local Government Area that services the Mooney Mooney and Cheero Point regions.	Mooney Mooney NSW 2083

2 LEGISLATIVE REQUIREMENTS

The requirements for PIRMPs are set out in *Part 5.7A of the POEO Act* and the *Chapter 4 of the POEO (G) Regulation*. In summary, this provision requires the following:

- All holders of EPLs must prepare a PIRMP (*section 153A, POEO Act*).
- The PIRMP must include the information detailed in the *POEO Act (section 153C)* and be in the form required by the *POEO (G) Regulation (section 131)*.
- Licensees must keep the PIRMP at the premises to which the EPL relates (*section 153D, POEO Act*).
- Licensees must test the plan in accordance with the *POEO (G) Regulation (section 133)*.

2.1 NOTIFICATION OF POLLUTION INCIDENTS

2.1.1 Definition of Pollution Incidents

The *POEO Act* defines a pollution incident as:

“an incident or set of circumstances during or as a consequence of which there is or is likely to be a leak, spill or other escape or deposit of a substance, as a result of which pollution has occurred, is occurring or is likely to occur. It includes an incident or set of circumstances in which a substance has been placed or disposed of on premises, but it does not include an incident or set of circumstances involving only the emission of any noise.”

2.1.2 Material Harm to the Environment

A pollution incident is required to be notified if there is a risk of ‘material harm to the environment’, which is defined in *section 147 of the POEO Act* as:

- (a) harm to the environment is material if:
 - (i) it involves actual or potential harm to the health or safety of human beings or to ecosystems that is not trivial, or
 - (ii) it results in actual or potential loss or property damage of an amount, or amounts in aggregate, exceeding \$10,000 (or such other amount as is prescribed by the regulations), and
- (b) loss includes the reasonable costs and expenses that would be incurred in taking all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent, mitigate or make good harm to the environment.

It does not matter that harm to the environment is caused only in the premises where the pollution incident occurs.

2.1.3 Duty to Notify

Under *section 148 of the POEO Act*, there is a duty to report pollution incidents causing or threatening material harm to the environment. Notification must be given immediately, i.e. promptly and without delay, after the person becomes aware of the incident.

Under the provisions of the *POEO Act (s148)*, the following people have a duty to notify a pollution incident occurring in the course of an activity that causes or threatens material harm to the environment:

- the person carrying on the activity;
- an employee or agent carrying on the activity;
- an employer carrying on the activity; or
- the occupier of the premises where the incident occurs.

Pollution incidents posing material harm to the environment should be notified to each 'relevant authority' as defined in section 148(8) of the POEO Act. 'Relevant authority' means in Council's case: EPA, NSW Ministry of Health (NSW Health Public Health Unit), SafeWork NSW, Central Coast Council and Fire and Rescue NSW. Additionally, Council will notify the NSW Food Authority (Shellfish Program) of each incident notified to the 'relevant authority' when a sewer surcharge could enter Brisbane Water and its bays, or Hawkesbury River and impact oyster farm leases. The abovementioned authorities are collectively referred to as the 'relevant authority' herein.

The following information about a pollution incident is required to be provided, as listed in section 150(1) of the POEO Act:

- (a) the time, date, nature, duration, and location of the incident,
- (b) the location of the place where pollution is occurring or is likely to occur,
- (c) the nature, the estimated quantity or volume and the concentration of any pollutants involved, if known,
- (d) the circumstances in which the incident occurred (including the cause of the incident, if known),
- (e) the action taken or proposed to be taken to deal with the incident and any resulting pollution or threatened pollution, if known,
- (f) other information prescribed by the regulations.

The information required is the information known to the person notifying the incident when the notification is required to be given.

If the information required in items (c), (d) or (e) is not known to that person when the initial notification is made but becomes known afterwards, that information must be notified immediately after it becomes known.

3 POLLUTION INCIDENT RESPONSE

Pollution incidents shall be responded to in accordance with the Pollution Incident Response Procedure (WQMS-PR-CMP-2147).

All licensed sites have developed site specific Emergency Response Plans for the management of potential incidents. While there may be various pollution incident types that may occur on sites, each incident will be assessed and responded to in a manner appropriate for that circumstance.

EPL 12170 contains specific requirements for monitoring waters and sediment in the vicinity of the algicide(s) application area. Refer to the WQMS Management Plan – Cyanobacteria (Blue Green Algae) (WQMS-MP-AWTP-847) for detailed requirements and sub plan for Somersby WTP (WQMS-WI-SWTP-936).

3.1 INCIDENT NOTIFICATION

3.1.1 Immediate Threat

If the incident presents an immediate threat to human health or property, the field response crew will call 000. Fire and Rescue NSW, the NSW Police and the NSW Ambulance Service are the first responders, as they are responsible for controlling and containing incidents.

Council's Environmental Incident Hotline must be notified following immediate threat notification to the relevant external first response agency.

3.1.2 Relevant Authorities

If the incident does not require control by an external first response agency, or once the 000 call has been made, Council's Environmental Incident Hotline must be contacted. The hotline representative will notify the relevant authorities provided in Table 5.

Table 2 - Contact Details of Relevant Authorities

Authority	Contact Details
Central Coast Council Environmental Incident Hotline	02 4350 5789
EPA Environment Line	131 555
Fire and Rescue NSW (if 000 call not required)	Central Coast Fire Control Centre: 1300 060 807
NSW Food Authority (Shellfish Program)	BH: 0427 290 367 or 0407 947 730 AH: 0407 078 269 food.nswsp@dpi.nsw.gov.au
NSW Health Public Health Unit	BH: 0412 014 430 or 0407 164 607 or if neither available: 4320 9730 AH: On-call Environmental Health Officer: 4320 2111
SafeWork NSW	13 10 50

3.1.3 Timing of Notification

The following points should be considered when determining the timing of notification:

- Notification of a pollution incident is to be given to each relevant authority at the first reasonable opportunity, considering the circumstances. Priority should be given to implementing immediate corrective actions which are necessary to prevent actual or potential harm to the health or safety of human beings, to ecosystems, or property.
- Where adequate resources are available to allow for concurrent notification and attendance to a pollution incident, notification to the Environmental Incident Hotline is to be given immediately (promptly and without delay).

The Environmental Incident Hotline Officer is to provide immediate notification to relevant authorities when the incident is deemed to be a notifiable pollution event as defined in Section 6. The information required to be provided is set out in the Pollution Incident Response Reporting Procedure (WQMS-PR-CMP-2189), however each relevant authority may ask specific questions about the incident.

3.1.4 Communications

Communicating with neighbours and the local community is an important element in managing the response to any pollution incident that has been notified to the relevant authorities. The purpose of stakeholder communication is to ensure that those potentially affected by a pollution incident know what has happened, how they may be affected by the incident, what they can do to minimise the risk of harm and what Council is doing to rectify the incident.

The need to provide stakeholder notification is to be assessed by the responding staff, with additional guidance sought from senior staff, CCC Environmental Incident Hotline Officer and compliance and health staff where deemed necessary.

The EPA, NSW Health or other relevant authorities may issue a direction to notify any other person of the incident that the relevant authority considers necessary. Directions given by the relevant authority must be complied with.

Pollution incidents requiring wider community notification will require the involvement of Water & Sewer Communication Business Partner and Community Liaison Manager in determining the appropriate communication channels and content with final approval provided by Unit Managers/Section Managers and signed off by the Director of Water & Sewer. Council's Compliance and Communications Officers will contact all impacted stakeholders through a range of mechanisms. The mechanisms used, communication needs, and the information provided to stakeholders will depend on the circumstances of the pollution incident.

EPL 12170 contains specific requirements for notifying users of waters in the vicinity of the algicide(s) application area. Refer to the Algae Management Procedure (WQMS-PR-ADAM-1091) for detailed requirements as this section provides only general instruction for stakeholder communication along with site specific instructions for Somersby WTP (WQMS-WI-SWTP-936).

3.1.4.1 Who to Notify

Following a pollution incident, an assessment should be undertaken of who should be notified, in addition to the relevant authorities. This assessment should be undertaken by Water Operation Centre (WOC), in consultation with Environmental Health and Systems Team through the Environmental Incident Hotline.

A pollution incident can occur anywhere within the local government area as a result of the activities undertaken by Water and Sewer. Reference should be made to the Critical Customers List when identifying stakeholders to notify. This list is not exhaustive and should only be used as a guide to the stakeholders who should be notified. Contact details can change and should be obtained by using up-to-date sources such as local phone directories, websites, and Council directories.

Table 3 - Potential Stakeholders

Potential Stakeholders	
Internal	External
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Executive Officer • Director Infrastructure Services • Director Environment and Planning • Director Water and Sewer • Unit Manager Network Operations and Maintenance • Unit Manager Assets and Projects • Unit Manager Headworks and Treatment • Customer Service Centre • Safety Partner, Work Health and Safety • Team Leader Systems Control • Unit Manager Communications, Marketing and Customer Engagement • Unit Manager Governance and Legal Counsel • Team Leader Estuary Management (Waterways) • Team Leader Beach Safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Occupants of neighbouring premises • Downstream water users • Users of recreational water facilities • Community Groups, Schools, Pre-Schools & Childcare centres • Hospitals and Nursing Homes • Businesses reliant on access to waterways • Media representatives

3.1.4.2 How to Notify

In most cases, a pollution incident will be confined to a particular location, and notification to stakeholders can be achieved by installing temporary pollution warning signs. Where the incident is not confined to a particular area and/or may have a significant impact upon the environment and or the public, a communication strategy is to be developed utilising the Master Communication Plan by Unit Managers, Section Managers, Team Leader Regulatory Compliance and Public Health Unit staff where necessary. The following types of communication mechanisms are to be considered when selecting an appropriate means of providing stakeholder notification:

Table 4 - Stakeholder Communication and Responsibility

Stakeholder Communication
Installation of temporary pollution warning signs at discharge locations and swimming locations
Phoning stakeholders
Emailing stakeholders
Issuing of media releases

Stakeholder Communication
Letterbox drops/door knocking
Posting of notices on Council’s website, social media and printed media

3.1.4.3 Information to be Provided

The information must be presented in a way that ensures that all stakeholders are aware of what has occurred and actions to be taken to prevent contact with the pollutant. To ensure that explanations are delivered clearly, industry terminology should be avoided.

Details to be provided may include, but are not limited to:

- time and date of the incident
- nature, duration, and location of the incident
- where pollution is occurring or is likely to occur
- estimated quantity/volume/concentration of any pollutants
- circumstances in which the incident had occurred.

The types of pollution incidents that are likely to occur may have an impact on the water quality of waterways used for recreation, harvesting of oysters, or drinking water supply catchments. It is therefore important that users of waterways are advised of how to avoid any potential harm that may arise from use of or contact with polluted waters.

An example of a general Council pollution warning sign that shall be erected to advise the public that the waterway or area is temporarily closed for recreational purposes is provided in Figure 1.



Figure 1 - General Pollution Warning Sign

The NSW Food Authority (Shellfish Program) is responsible for the temporary closure of shellfish harvesting areas following a pollution event. It is therefore important that the NSW Food Authority (Shellfish Program) receive details of pollution events in a timely manner. Water quality monitoring results and an estimate of volume of sewage discharged are to be provided when a pollution incident affects an oyster harvesting area to allow them to determine if oyster leases must be quarantined from harvesting. Additionally, information is to be provided to the local coordinators in each estuary in the event of direct pollution of a shellfish harvesting area.

The following information examples are to be considered for use when issuing warnings about potential harm that may result from contact with polluted waters:

- Waters may be polluted. Contact may cause serious harm to humans and animals.
- Council advises that people should avoid using the location(s) listed above for any activities that involve direct body contact with the water. Stock or pets should not be allowed to drink from, or swim in the water.
- People who believe they may have been affected by the polluted waters should seek medical treatment.

In instances where a pollution incident is still occurring, customers may be requested to minimise usage of the sewerage system until repairs have been completed and service is returned.

Stakeholders are to be advised of what action is being taken or proposed to be taken in response to the pollution incident. Types of actions being undertaken may include:

- Discharge/spill has been contained
- Notification to relevant authorities provided
- Repair or replacement of damaged equipment/assets
- Water quality monitoring
- Site clean-up/remediation
- Additional noise, light, or vehicle activity during rectification of site

Updates and outcomes of any pollution incident should be provided to stakeholders who are notified of a pollution incident. It is important that relevant stakeholders are advised of the latest information available and details of how the incident has been resolved. Updates can include:

- Details of latest water quality results
- Lifting of warnings
- Copies of final reports sent to the EPA
- Verbal communication with stakeholder to clarify the outcome of the incident.

If a member of the public suspects a pollution incident has occurred as a result of Council activity, Council should be contacted immediately (24-hours a day, 7-days a week) on (02) 4306 7900.