



2015-17 LIGHT INDUSTRY PROGRAM

OVERVIEW

The 2015-17 Light Industry Program (Program) objective was to protect Perth's Swan and Canning river systems by preventing contaminants such as oil, coolant, paint and pesticides from entering groundwater and stormwater drainage systems from light industrial premises within the priority catchments of these rivers.

The Program was established to address issues raised in the WA Auditor General's Report 16: August 2014 titled "Our Heritage and Our Future: Health of the Swan Canning River System" (The Report). The Report stated that despite a range of actions, the Swan Canning river system was not adequately protected and that water quality was declining; in part due to contaminants from small to medium enterprises (SMEs) entering urban drainage system.

The Program was a joint initiative between the Department of Water and Environmental Regulation (DWER), the Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions and seven local governments (LGs) located within priority catchments areas.

The Program was funded for two years from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program, which allowed DWER to employ an Officer to work exclusively on the Program. The DWER Officer worked with the participating LG officers to increase LG capability and autonomy to deal with pollution issues arising from light industrial activities.

The Program not only achieved a major reduction in unauthorised discharges to the environment, but also educated light industry operators on how they can contribute to preventing pollution and protecting the environment with minimal effort. Additionally, the Program increased the capability of LGs to carry out industrial compliance and enforcement activities to reduce industrial pollution of stormwater systems and its impact on Perth's river systems.

The Program allowed meaningful collaboration between Federal, State and LGs as well as supporting community, business and environmental associations who all contributed to the success of the Program. It highlighted the need for legislative understanding and hands-on engagement with businesses and the broader community.

Due to the outstanding success of the Program, DWER has agreed to continue the Program beyond its original planned completion date. DWER will continue to provide auditing assistance and support to the existing LG partners and plans to engage additional councils within sensitive catchment areas.

AUDITS COMPLETED

Over two years a total of 918 audits (includes both initial and follow-up audits) had taken place at 495 premises throughout the seven participating LG areas.

KEY FINDINGS

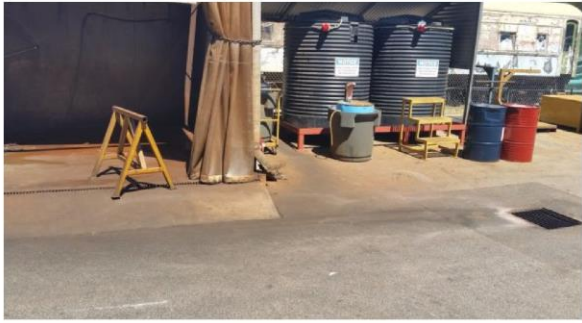
Environmental risks were identified at 73.4% of premises at initial inspection; while 26.6% of premises were fully compliant with environmental legislation.

Over the Program's two-year lifespan, the environmental non-compliance rate dropped from 73.4% to 12.5%. 9.3% non-complaint premises were referred to another agency or DWER specialist teams for resolution where the risks were high/extreme.

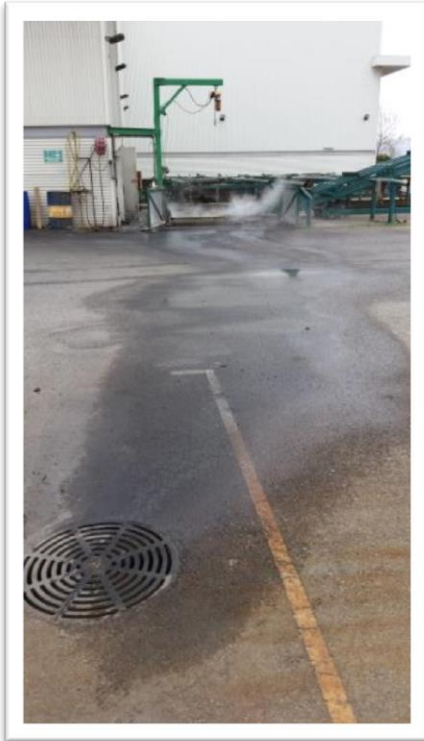
The Program has been successful in identifying and rectifying practices at light industrial premises that were releasing pollutants into priority river catchments. It also improved capabilities of participating LGs in light industry regulation and gave DWER a clearer appreciation of the issues being faced by LGs in regulating industries.

Case Studies Rectifying Environmental Issues

BEFORE



AFTER



Observed Environmental Discharges



- Plastic in a stormwater drain.



- Discharges to unsealed ground from spray painting.



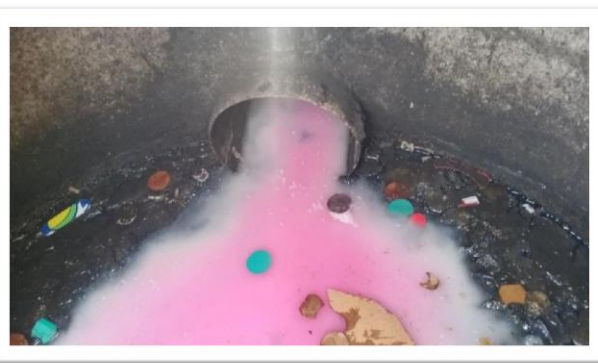
- Hydrocarbons from machinery washing.



- Herbicide and liquid fertiliser wastewater.



- Sediment and degreaser discharges to stormwater drain.



- Wastewater discharge of cleaning varnish and glue.