



## Environment Protection Authority – Newcastle Community Consultative Committee on the Environment Minutes

<b>Today's Meeting Date:</b>	7 May 2019 (No 54)	<b>Next meeting date:</b>	9 July 2019 (No 55)
<b>Meeting location:</b>	EPA Newcastle	<b>Last Meeting Date:</b>	12 February 2019 (No 53)
<b>Meeting opened at:</b>	1730 hrs	<b>Meeting closed at:</b>	1945 hrs
<b>EPA Convenor:</b>	Mitchell Bennett – EPA	<b>Minute Secretary:</b>	Emily Ingram - EPA
<b>Present:</b>	John Tate - Chair Dr Craig Dalton - Department of Health Thomas Levick - Environment Representative Scott Thompson - Office of Environment and Heritage Mark Manning - Newcastle City Council Rick Banyard - Minister's Community Representative Trudie Larnach - Industry Representative Siobhan Isherwood – Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils Steve James - EPA Mitchell Bennett – EPA Emily Ingram - EPA		
<b>Apologies:</b>	Chris Tola - Community Representative Keith Craig - Community Representative Loredana Warren - Office of Environment and Heritage Karen Marler - EPA		

No	Agenda Item	Action	Person Responsible	Completion Date
<b>1</b>	<b>Review of Minutes of Previous Meeting and Actions Arising</b>			
1.1	Review of minutes from meeting held 12 February 2019 (No 53)	The minutes were adopted with minor changes.	Chair	
1.2	<b>Action 1:</b> Mr Levick to send details of research on energy generated by waste to Ms Marler.		Thomas Levick	6.5.19
1.3	<b>Action 2:</b> Mr Levick to send detail on the stability of the solar plastics to Mr Manning.		Thomas Levick	28.02.19
1.4	<b>Action 3:</b> a copy of Mr Lynchs' report to be sent to all committee members.		Emily Ingram	6.03.19
1.5	<b>Action 4:</b> Update the committee on improvements the EPA will adopt to report pollution electronically.	This is still being developed.	Emily Ingram	Ongoing
1.6	<b>Action 5:</b> Update the Committee on improvements to the OEH website for air quality data.		Loredana Warren	Ongoing
1.7	<b>Action 6:</b> A report to be given to the Committee of the status of benzene monitoring in Newcastle.	This will be available after Koppers report to the EPA on 24 May. Information should be available at the next NCCCE meeting.	Peter Jamieson	Ongoing
1.8	<b>Action 7:</b> A copy of the report from Fire and Rescue on the progress and management of the coal pit fires at Kooragang Island to be send to Committee members.		Karen Marler	25.03.19
1.9	<b>Action 8:</b> Provide a presentation to the Committee on the EPA compliance policy and prosecution guidelines.	See agenda item 2.2	Mitchell Bennett	7.05.19
1.10	<b>11 December 2019 Action 3:</b> (Meeting 52) Send a copy of Hamish Rutherford's presentation to Committee members		Emily Ingram	28.02.19

No	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
2.1	<b>Newcastle EPA Waste Team Overview and Update</b>	<p>Mr James (Unit Head – EPA Regional Waste Compliance) provided an overview of the main waste related issues, legal investigations and challenges being managed by the EPA in the Hunter. These included: the successful prosecution of a company and its director for an unlawful waste facility in Tomago; successful prosecution against Ditchfield for a water pollution incident at Summerhill Landfill; an appeal against the finding that Grafil Pty Ltd was not guilty for offences relating to waste at its Salt Ash property; inappropriate use of waste to construct flood mounds in the Maitland and Port Stephens LGAs; ongoing court action involving Mangrove Mountain Landfill; and challenges dealing with recyclable material in the wake of China’s National Sword Policy and related issues.</p> <p>Mr Banyard suggested that the definition of asbestos waste could be improved so that it does not include material with traces of asbestos. Mr James explained that asbestos can now be easily identified and the current definition provides an incentive to encourage the segregation of asbestos waste during demolition.</p> <p>Mr Tate suggested that the Committee be provided with information on the use of recovered glass for road base.</p>	<b>Action 1:</b> Invite someone to present on resource recovery and recovered glass	
2.2	<b>EPA Compliance Policy and Prosecution guidelines</b>	<p>Mr Bennett (EPA Acting Director – Hunter) explained that the EPA’s Compliance Policy provides the basis for regulatory decision making. The EPA regulatory framework includes a range of different approaches that can be used together to improve environmental performance. Regulatory tools range from advisory letters to prosecution. Following an alleged incident, EPA officers collect evidence and use the policy to decide on an appropriate course of action. They seek legal advice when required. In many instances, the EPA would prefer the offender to spend resources on fixing the problem, rather than paying fines.</p>		

No	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
2.3	<b>OEH presentation on the Newcastle Summer 2018/19 Air Quality Report</b>	<p>Mr Thompson (Senior Air Quality Monitoring Officer – OEH) reported that during summer 2018/19, Newcastle had very much below average rainfall and very much above average temperatures.</p> <p>NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, NH<sub>3</sub> and PM<sub>2.5</sub> were below the benchmarks on all days, but there were 40 days over the PM<sub>10</sub> benchmark. Beresfield and Wallsend had no days, Mayfield and Newcastle each had one day, Carrington had two days and Stockton had 40 days. At Stockton, elevated levels mainly occurred under onshore easterly (86% of the time), due predominantly to sea salt. Smoke from bushfires contributed to elevated PM<sub>10</sub> at Carrington and Stockton on 2 January and Newcastle and Stockton on 26 January.</p> <p>There was an increase in particle levels in the 12-month period to the end of summer 2018-19 compared to the three previous summers. Rolling annual average PM<sub>10</sub> levels increased at all sites. Rolling annual average PM<sub>2.5</sub> increased at Beresfield, Mayfield and Stockton, and remained similar at the other sites. This was due to the contribution of long-range dust from drought-affected areas in NSW. Most of NSW experienced very much below average to lowest-on-record rainfall in the past 12 months.</p> <p>The EPA advised that EPA Victoria was coordinating a review of the National Environment Protection Measure (NEPM) for NO<sub>2</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>, and O<sub>3</sub>. A community consultation session is planned for Newcastle on 23 July 2019, at the Newcastle Town Hall. NCCCE members and their networks were encouraged.</p>	<p><b>Action 2:</b> EPA to provide information to Committee members about the NEPM review community consultation session to be held in Newcastle.</p> <p><b>Action 3:</b> EPA to update the next Committee meeting on the NEPM review community consultation session.</p>	complete

No	Agenda Item	Notes	Action/Decision	Status
2.4	<b>Environmental projects coordinated through the Hunter Joint Organisation</b>	<p>Ms Isherwood (Environmental Projects Coordinator, Hunter Joint Organisation of Councils) explained that the Joint Organisation is focussing on resource recovery, environmental resilience, liveable communities and natural systems. Specific projects of interest to the Newcastle Community include: disaster communication and resilience; disaster resilience projects and regional waste education programs.</p> <p>In response to a question from Mr Tate about the introduction of fortnightly general waste collections, Ms Isherwood advised that many councils were encouraging home composting to separate green waste from general waste. Initiatives to reduce waste often require people to take increased responsibility.</p> <p>Mr Banyard noted that some waste reduction initiatives may encourage illegal dumping or generate other waste streams. Ms Isherwood responded that communities and councils need to move towards a circular economy. This will require many organisations, an initial significant financial commitment, and this is the goal the Joint Organisations of Councils is aiming for to achieve.</p>		
2.5	<b>EPA Update</b>	Mr Bennett advised that a fire burning in waste coal on Kooragang Island had now been largely extinguished. Investigations are continuing into an incident in Mayfield on 8 May 2019 that caused odours that impacted on some workers in an industrial area. Further details cannot be provided as this is an ongoing investigation and the EPA must ensure that it does not influence the evidence that is being provided to it.		
2.6	<b>General Business</b>	<p>Mr Tate reminded the Committee that its Procedures had been in place for a six-month trial. He suggested that these procedures be distributed and be adopted if no objection is received within seven days.</p> <p>Ms Ingram will be leaving the EPA after June 2019 and Bianca Morton would be taking on the role of Committee secretary. Ms Ingram was thanked for her contributions and wished all the best for her new work.</p>	<b>Action 4:</b> Distribute the Committee Procedures to Members and adopt if no objection is received within 7 days.	complete