

Water Pollution Investigation

Cockle Creek Boolaroo

On 19 November 2015, the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) received a report that a milky white discharge of water was flowing into Cockle Creek at Boolaroo. While it initially appeared that the water was flowing from the adjacent residential subdivision development at the 'Triangle Paddock' the EPA investigation established that the water had flowed from a sediment basin on the Pasmenco site.

The EPA has analysed the test results taken from Cockle Creek on 19 November and found that the discharge contained:

- cadmium concentrations that were only marginally elevated above background levels and that did not exceed the aquatic ecosystem protection guideline for marine waters or the recreation guidelines for swimming;
- elevated concentrations of zinc but levels did not exceed the recreation guidelines for swimming;
- elevated concentrations of lead but levels did not exceed the recreation guidelines for swimming, with the dissolved fraction meeting the aquatic ecosystem protection guideline for marine waters; and
- elevated concentrations of aluminium which exceeded the recreation guidelines for swimming.

These levels in this location do not present a concern for human health, however the short and long term environmental impacts will form part of the EPA's ongoing investigations.

Sample Results							
Total metals	Pasmenco Upper Catchment Dam	Pasmenco discharge point 19 U/S Main Rd	Gully Next To Ambulance Station D/S Main Rd	Gully above culvert adjacent to Tripad U/S TC Frith	Gully prior to discharge to Cockle Creek D/S TC Frith	Cockle Creek U/S of discharge	ANZECC Guideline - Primary Contact Recreation
Pb	18	16	26	13	12	2.9	50
Zn	180	180	220	140	140	30	5000
Cd	1.9	1.8	2.4	3.3	3.1	2.2	5
Al	14000	14000	14000	1900	1900	120	200
Dissolved metals							
Pb	0.66	1.3	0.91	0.68	0.26	BDL*	50
Zn	80	100	90	50	80	30	5000
Cd	1.1	1.1	1.4	1.7	2.4	1.3	5
Al	110	220	140	150	40	40	200
* BDL = Below detection limit							
All units expressed in Micrograms per Litre (ug/L)							

For more information contact the EPA Environment Line on 131 555.