



Robyn Parker MP

Minister for the Environment

Minister for Heritage

MEDIA RELEASE

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NSW GOVERNMENT TO CRACK DOWN ON ILLEGAL DUMPING

Environment Minister Robyn Parker today announced the NSW Government will introduce legislation to Parliament this week to crack down on illegal waste and dumping operations by introducing jail terms for repeat offenders.

Ms Parker said changes to the *Protection of the Environment Operations Amendment (Illegal Waste Disposal) Bill* will include additional powers for the Environment Protection Authority and increase sentencing and penalty provisions for the courts system.

“The community rightly expects criminals and serial offenders who illegally dump waste to be heavily penalised,” Ms Parker said.

“Illegal dumping is an environmental crime that costs the community millions of dollars each year and causes harm to people and the environment.

“This legislation will help us to stamp out rogue waste operators and put those who flout the law behind bars.”

Ms Parker said the legislation will include:

- The introduction of a maximum two-year jail term for offenders who commit a waste offence within five years of a prior waste conviction - a crime currently punishable with a fine;
- Introducing a maximum 18 month jail term for people who knowingly supply false or misleading information about waste (currently a fine);
- Authorising the EPA to seize a motor vehicle it believes has been used in repeat waste offences, and for the courts to then order the forfeiture of the vehicle if the operator is convicted;
- Enabling the courts to take into account the potential profit from a waste offence for consideration as an additional penalty if convicted; and
- Amending the application point of the waste levy to prevent possible stockpiling and illegal dumping of waste on private property, state forests and national parks.

“The current penalties do not outweigh the profits from illegal activity, and as long as that remains, unscrupulous waste operators will continue to exploit the system,” Ms Parker said.

“There are cases of serial waste dumpers escaping with suspended custodial sentences after being found guilty of dumping thousands of tonnes of waste in - despite prior convictions.

“This sends a clear message that the monetary fines issued by the Courts and EPA are no longer just the ‘cost of doing business’ - but that repeat illegal dumpers could now face up to two years in jail.

Ms Parker said the legislation also proposed to apply the waste levy on all operators, instead of just landfills as it currently applies.

“This important bill represents vital reforms to boost the EPA’s regulatory powers and crack down on rogue operators in our waste industry,” Ms Parker said.

“The only people who will be upset about these changes are the people who are rorting the system.”

MEDIA: John McCormack 0467 731 806