

ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT ON LYNDHURST LANDFILL

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WHY COMMISSION AN ENVIRONMENTAL AUDIT ON LYNDHURST?

The audit on Lyndhurst was designed to address key questions about the landfill's operation raised by the community at a meeting with landfill operator, PWM Pty Ltd, and EPA in December 2000.

The audit provides the community and other interested parties with objective, scientifically accurate information about the landfill's performance as well as any potential impact on the surrounding environment.

WHAT DID THE AUDIT ADDRESS?

The audit on Lyndhurst examined management practices at the landfill as well as any potential impacts of the landfill on groundwater or surface water, in particular Eumemmering Creek.

The audit was not designed to address local amenity issues such as birds, noise or odour. These issues are being dealt with by EPA Victoria in consultation with PWM and the community.

WHAT DID THE AUDIT FIND?

The results of the Environmental Audit conducted on the Lyndhurst landfill should serve to reassure residents that the site does not present a risk to their health and that wastes deposited at the facility are acceptable.

The audit found no impact from the landfill on Eumemmering Creek and established that groundwater around the facility does not present a risk to local residents.

A change in groundwater quality was identified however, with an increase in groundwater salt levels detected at some monitoring bores. These increased salt levels do not present a risk to human health, but make the groundwater less suitable for potential uses such as irrigation or stock watering. Whilst groundwater around the site is not currently used, it must be protected in case of future uses.

There are a number of possible causes for the increased salt levels, including natural evaporation processes. Groundwater monitoring around the landfill will be increased so that the cause of change can be identified.

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The audit also found that prescribed industrial wastes accepted at the landfill generally met licence requirements and that PWM is testing waste appropriately. In some isolated cases where PWM's sampling program identified that licence limits had been exceeded, appropriate follow up action was taken.

Some opportunities to improve PWM's record keeping and management systems were identified by the audit. These recommendations will further reduce the possibility of inappropriate wastes being accepted at the landfill.

WHAT IS BEING DONE IN RESPONSE TO AUDIT FINDINGS?

Additional groundwater monitoring bores will be established around the landfill.

Recommendations in the audit report have received a positive response from PWM and the company has already taken some action in relation to implementing audit recommendations. EPA will amend PWM's operating licence to ensure that audit recommendations are implemented.

ARE THE AUDIT RESULTS AVAILABLE?

An audit report has been produced and is publicly available. The report can be accessed on EPA's website at: www.epa.vic.gov.au or by phoning EPA Victoria on (03) 9695 2722.