

Your reference: EPPR00869113
Our reference: C-CPLRC-100084354 / E-100365337



Department of
Environment and Science

18 December 2023

Chief Executive Officer
Northern SEQ Distributer – Retailer Authority T/A Unitywater
33 King Street
Caboolture, QLD 4510

Attention: Mr Rhett Duncan, Executive Manager Customer Delivery
Email to: Rhett Duncan Rhett.Duncan@unitywater.com

Dear Ms Jackson,

Re: Finalisation of Environmental Protection Order – E-100365337

On Friday, 17 February 2023 the administering authority issued an environmental protection order (EPO) to Northern SEQ Distributer – Retailer Authority T/A Unitywater (Unitywater) under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* (the Act). The administering authority is the Chief Executive of the Department of Environment and Science (the department).

The EPO was issued with respect to Unitywater's activities at the Kawana sewage treatment plant (the STP), Main Drive, Bokarina, QLD 4575 on land described as Lot 101 on Plan SP295012 (the premises).

A. Requirements

The requirements of this EPO were:

- 1) By **5:00pm on 31 March 2023** you must engage an appropriately qualified person (AQP) to carry out the requirements of the notice and confirm the engagement in writing to sunshinecoast.esr@des.qld.gov.au. The written confirmation of the engagement must include each persons' academic qualifications and suitable experience relevant to the scope of work on the investigation each AQP will undertake.
- 2) By **5:00pm on 18 August 2023** the AQP identified in requirement 1 above must investigate at least the following options (or a combination of the following and other options) for their effectiveness in reducing microplastics (less than ~2mm) being released from the premises to waters:
 - a) implementing a sand filter or other type of suitable technology into the sewage treatment process to separate out microplastics;
 - b) removing current MBBR media contained in bioreactors and exchanging to an alternative more robust media type to reduce the generation of microplastics; and
 - c) exchanging the MBBR bioreactor and any required infrastructure to a treatment process that prevents microplastics being generated.
- 3) By **5:00pm on 18 August 2023** the AQP engaged in requirement 1 above must undertake a desktop study to investigate all other reasonable and practicable potential options to reduce micro plastic released from the premises to waters as a result of the treatment process.
- 4) 4. By **5:00pm on 20 October 2023** you must provide a written report to the department at sunshinecoast.esr@des.qld.gov.au, detailing the following for each option prescribed in requirements 2 and 3 above:

- a) estimated efficiency of each option and calculated reduction of microplastics being generated and released;
 - b) estimated cost of implementing each stage (if staged implementation necessary) and overall cost of implementation and ongoing operating costs;
 - c) estimated time to implement;
 - d) information clearly demonstrating how each option would be implemented; and
 - e) advantages and disadvantages of each option for effective and efficient sewage treatment suitable for the location of the premises and the receiving environment.
- 5) After considering the report required by Requirement 4 of this EPO you must make a written recommendation identifying the optimum option to prevent or minimise the release of microplastics to the environment from the premises and include a copy of the recommendation, with justification, with the report.

B. Compliance with the requirements

In determining compliance with these requirements of the EPO, the department has considered:

- The curriculum vitae of appropriately qualified persons (AQP) appointed by Unitywater in accordance with Part B, Requirement 1, as advised via email dated 29 March 2023.
- The AQP confirmation letter dated 17 August 2023 (Jacobs) confirming works completed as per Requirements 2 and 3 of the EPO by the prescribed dates.
- The EPO report submission letter and accompanying report dated 20 October 2023 provided in response to Requirements 4 and 5 of the EPO.
- The AQP findings presentation facilitated by Unitwater on 1 November 2023.
- Summary findings following technical review of the EPO report and submission letter by the department's Water Sciences division.
- Discussion had during and outcomes arising from regular project update meetings and review of monthly progress reports provided by Unitywater.

C. Obligations

The department has determined that Unitywater has satisfied the requirements of the EPO. Accordingly this letter serves as a notice that this EPO is finalised and no longer in effect.

Officers from the department look forward to meeting with representatives of Unitywater on 20 February 2024 to further progress the matters addressed by the EPO.

Should you have any queries in relation to this notice, please contact Mark Watson on telephone number 5459 6133.



Signature

Tim Brain
Manager Compliance
Department of Environment and Science
Delegate of the Chief Executive
Environmental Protection Act 1994

18/12/2023

Date

Enquiries:
Mark Watson
Compliance Centre: **Sunshine Coast**
Email: sunshinecoast.esr@des.qld.gov.au
Telephone: (07) 5459 6132