



24 February 2009

Media Statement

Tough requirements set out for SMRC

The Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) has issued an Environmental Protection Notice to the Southern Metropolitan Regional Council (SMRC) for its waste facility in Canning Vale.

The notice will make it a legal requirement for the SMRC to apply an odour abatement plan that it developed to address ongoing odour issues at the Regional Resource Recovery Centre (RRRC).

DEC Deputy Director General (Environment) Robert Atkins said that under the notice, the SMRC must engage an independent consultant to carry out a detailed engineering review and systems audit of the facility.

"The consultant is needed to identify any deficiencies and possible improvements that could be made to reduce odours and the impact on the nearby community," Mr Atkins said.

"Issued under the *Environmental Protection Act 1986*, the notice requires that the SMRC conduct an audit of operational procedures and maintenance in case there are any practices that might contribute to the odour problem.

"The SMRC will also need to find a feasible solution for the odours."

The RRRC, which separates recyclable products from green waste and rubbish and then converts the waste into compost and mulch, has been the subject of odour complaints from the surrounding community for several years.

DEC requested the odour abatement plan after an investigation found the facility to be continuing to emit odours that unreasonably impacted on the community.

"There were some inadequacies with the SMRC's initial odour abatement plan proposed in November 2008 but these have been addressed in a new plan that was submitted on 14 January this year," Mr Atkins said.

"We can now look forward to making more positive progress on the issue and I am confident that the Environmental Protection Notice will sufficiently guide the SMRC in preparing and implementing a comprehensive plan that will reduce the effect of odours on the community.

"I understand the community's frustration at the time it is taking to sort this out, however DEC is using the legislation to the full extent under the circumstances by issuing an Environmental Protection Notice."

The SMRC will need to provide a detailed report to DEC by 13 April 2009 and a detailed implementation plan by 28 April 2009.

Media contact: DEC Media 6467 5555