

Odours ultimatum

By **ADAM BROCKMAN**

THE Southern Metropolitan Regional Council has been issued a 21-day ultimatum to stop odours from its waste composting facility or face it being shut down.

It follows the release of a report by the Department of Environment and Conservation which found the Regional Resource Recovery Centre was "the most significant source contributing to odours in the area".

The centre has been the target of complaints since late 2005 and was forced to shut down in December, 2006. It started receiving waste again in February, 2007.

The SMRC said it had yet to be informed

about the conditions of its required abatement plan and questioned the legitimacy of the findings against it.

It has been directed to prepare an odour abatement plan within 21 days, after which an Environmental Protection Notice will be served requiring the odours to be prevented within a set time.

DEC deputy director general Robert Atkins said the DEC would also amend the RRRRC's licence to include an offensive odour condition. A breach of its licence could force the SMRC to shut the plant.

Riverton MLA Mike Nahan, who gave an election commitment to require the release of the report, said the results vindicated the concerns raised by residents.

"The community will become directly involved with the DEC in determining where the monitoring will go and what level of odour is acceptable," he said.

SMRC chairman Doug Thompson said the council did not believe the centre had an odour problem and questioned the DEC's survey methods, pointing to the SMRC's own surveys that found 17 different odour sources in the area.

"While we accept the role they have as a regulator, we don't accept the objectivity of the report and I don't accept their professional expertise," he said.

Canning Melville Community Odour Action Group spokeswoman Mandy Clarke said the report proved residents' com-

plaints had been justified.

"The DEC needs to work with residents a lot more closely. Considering what we've been through, the report makes us feel a little better but there's still a lot more to be done," she said.

The DEC combined a market survey of 265 households and businesses within a 1.2km radius of the facility with air quality testing. The report stated the assessors' surveys "clearly indicated" the RRRRC's composting facility was the most significant source of the odour, but conceded that the chemical samplings were inconclusive.