



MEDIA RELEASE

Inquiry into the Management of Domestic Wastewater

The Chair of the NSW Legislative Assembly Committee on Environment and Regulation has today tabled a report in Parliament on the Inquiry into the Regulation of Domestic Wastewater.

The Inquiry was prompted by concerns about the adequacy of regulation concerning onsite sewage management and associated treatment processes, with particular emphasis on food safety and the risk of localised contamination.

The Committee's Inquiry focused on three key areas. The first of these areas considered design standards of sewerage treatment installation systems and the maintenance of domestic wastewater systems. The second considered the impact of faulty or mismanaged systems on human health and the environment, as well as local horticulture and aquaculture industries. Lastly, the Committee gave regard to improving current regulatory arrangements, including the update of guidelines, the accreditation of industry professionals, and the expansion of powers of local government authorities to regulate domestic wastewater systems. On these matters, a total of 18 recommendations were made.

Chair of the Committee on Environment and Regulation, Mr Chris Patterson MP, Member for Camden, said: "The Inquiry gave the Committee an opportunity to explore the issues that has beset local communities for many years."

Mr Patterson continued: "The evidence received demonstrated the considerable concern within our community at faulty or mismanaged wastewater systems, with its impact on human health and the environment. Many expressed frustration at the lack of adequate controls to regulate and oversight wastewater operations. Particular concern was expressed by representatives of our oyster industry who informed the Committee of the significant impacts on their harvest.

"The recommendations made by the Committee aim to improve current practices with a view to alleviating the problems identified during the course of this Inquiry."

For media comment, please contact me on (02) 4655 3333. Further information, including a copy of the Report, can be obtained by visiting the Committee website at <http://parliament.nsw.gov.au/environmentandregulation> or by contacting Mr Jason Arditi, Inquiry Manager, on (02) 9230 2096.

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