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Media Release

Recycling of water for Smithton

Treated wastewater which has traditionally been discharged into Kemps Bay will now be diverted for recycling on agricultural land during the summer months to improve the environmental impact of the Pelican Point sewage treatment plant.

The arrangement with a local landowner was reached while the Smithton plant is undergoing significant works to remove thousands of tonnes of sludge from three of the six sewerage ponds at the STP between now and the end of March 2018.

The works are set to improve the plant's operating efficiency and reduce odour issues from the site, while the new agreement will improve the ongoing environmental impact of the plant into the future.

TasWater's Sewerage System Performance Leader, Royce Aldred, confirmed the new re-use supply arrangement with a neighbouring property owner is one of many TasWater is engaged in to reduce our impact on receiving environments from our infrastructure.

"There will be zero to minimal discharge to Kemps Bay during the summer months and thanks to the de-sludging works the quality of treated waste water being released back into the environment will be significantly improved." Mr Aldred said.

"TasWater also has local farmers on board to receive most of the biosolids being removed from the site in the de-sludging process to be spread on agricultural land not used for food crops, as high-nutrient fertiliser.

"Discharges to Kemps Bay will remain unchanged during the winter months, when there is no demand for treated waste water to supplement stored water for use on agricultural land."

Mr Aldred said the re-use scheme would involve some new pipelines and construction of a new pump station. He said the costs would be far outweighed by the environmental benefits.

Residents in the area surrounding the Smithton plant will see a significant increase in activity in coming weeks as the de-sludging process continues.

Tankers that will be used to transfer the sludge off-site have already arrived while the dredge being used by contractor Conhur Pty Ltd is currently going through Customs after arriving in Australia from Fiji.

Sludge from the lagoons will initially be removed to on-site drying beds. Most of it will be transported off-site as liquid or de-watered and re-used on local agricultural land as biosolids.



Residents may notice an increase in odours while the sludge removal work is carried out. This is likely to be the case particularly during the first two months while sludge is being removed from the first (and worst-affected) lagoon. A water cap, where a quantity of water sits atop the sludge in the lagoon will remain in place to help minimise the risk of any odour impacts.

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Further information: *TasWater media contact: Eleanor Talbot (03) 6333 9349*