

Resource Recovery Exemption under Part 9, Clauses 91 and 92 of the Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014

The effluent exemption 2014

Introduction

This exemption:

- is issued by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) under clauses 91 and 92 of the Protection of the Environment Operations (Waste) Regulation 2014 (Waste Regulation); and
- exempts a consumer of effluent from certain requirements under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO Act) and the Waste Regulation in relation to the application of that waste to land, provided the consumer complies with the conditions of this exemption.

This exemption should be read in conjunction with 'the effluent order 2014'.

1. Waste to which this exemption applies

- 1.1. This exemption applies to effluent that is, or is intended to be, applied to land as a soil amendment or for the purposes of irrigation.
- 1.2. Effluent means:
 - 1.2.1. waste water from sewage treatment systems (including the treatment works, pumping stations, sewage overflow structures and the reticulation system), or
 - 1.2.2. waste water from collection or treatment systems that are ancillary to processing industries involving livestock, agriculture, wood, paper or food, being waste water that is conveyed from the place of generation by means of a pipe, canal or conventional method used in irrigation (but not by means of a tanker or truck), or
 - 1.2.3. waste water from collection or treatment systems that are ancillary to intensive livestock, aquaculture or mariculture, being waste water that is released by means of a pipe, canal or other conventional method used in irrigation as part of day to day farming operations, in accordance with the Act.

2. Persons to whom this exemption applies

- 2.1. This exemption applies to any person who applies, or intends to apply, the effluent to land as set out in 1.1.

3. Duration

- 3.1. This exemption commences on 24 November 2014 and is valid until revoked by the EPA by notice published in the Government Gazette.

4. Premises to which this exemption applies

- 4.1. This exemption applies to the premises at which the consumer's actual or intended application of effluent is carried out.

5. Revocation

- 5.1. 'The effluent exemption 2008' which commenced on 20 June 2008 is revoked from 24 November 2014.

6. Exemption

- 6.1. Subject to the conditions of this exemption, the EPA exempts each consumer from the following provisions of the POEO Act and the Waste Regulation in relation to the consumer's actual or intended application of effluent to land as a soil amendment or for the purposes of irrigation at the premises:
- section 48 of the POEO Act in respect of the scheduled activities described in clauses 39 and 42 of Schedule 1 of the POEO Act;
 - Part 4 of the Waste Regulation;
 - section 88 of the POEO Act; and
 - clause 109 and 110 of the Waste Regulation.
- 6.2. The exemption does not apply in circumstances where effluent is received at the premises for which the consumer holds a licence under the POEO Act that authorises the carrying out of the scheduled activities on the premises under clause 39 'waste disposal (application to land)' or clause 40 'waste disposal (thermal treatment)' of Schedule 1 of the POEO Act.

7. Conditions of exemption

The exemption is subject to the following conditions:

- 7.1. The effluent can only be applied to land as a soil amendment or for the purposes of irrigation.
- 7.2. The consumer must ensure that any application of effluent to land must occur within a reasonable period of time after its receipt.

8. Definitions

In this exemption:

application or apply to land means applying to land by:

- spraying, spreading or depositing on the land; or
- ploughing, injecting or mixing into the land; or
- filling, raising, reclaiming or contouring the land.

consumer means a person who applies, or intends to apply, effluent to land.

**Manager Waste Strategy and Innovation
Environment Protection Authority
(by delegation)**

Notes

The EPA may amend or revoke this exemption at any time. It is the responsibility of the consumer to ensure they comply with all relevant requirements of the most current exemption. The current version of this exemption will be available on www.epa.nsw.gov.au

In gazetting or otherwise issuing this exemption, the EPA is not in any way endorsing the use of this substance or guaranteeing that the substance will confer benefit.

The conditions set out in this exemption are designed to minimise the risk of potential harm to the environment, human health or agriculture, although neither this exemption nor the accompanying order guarantee that the environment, human health or agriculture will not be harmed.

The consumer should assess whether or not the effluent is fit for the purpose the material is proposed to be used for, and whether this use will cause harm. The consumer may need to seek expert engineering or technical advice.

Regardless of any exemption provided by the EPA, the person who causes or permits the application of the substance to land must ensure that the action is lawful and consistent with any other legislative requirements including, if applicable, any development consent(s) for managing operations on the site(s).

The receipt of effluent remains subject to other relevant environmental regulations in the POEO Act and the Waste Regulation. For example, a person who pollutes land (s. 142A) or water (s. 120), or causes air pollution through the emission of odours (s. 126), or does not meet the special requirements for asbestos waste (Part 7 of the Waste Regulation), regardless of having an exemption, is guilty of an offence and subject to prosecution.

This exemption does not alter the requirements of any other relevant legislation that must be met in utilising this material, including for example, the need to prepare a Safety Data Sheet (SDS).

Failure to comply with the conditions of this exemption constitutes an offence under clause 91 of the Waste Regulation.