

ITEM A LORD MAYORAL MINUTE - UNDERGROUND PETROLEUM STORAGE SYSTEMS

Underground Petroleum Storage Systems (UPSS) are found in service stations and some industrial premises and depots. Wollongong City Council has 64 known UPSS sites, the majority of which are service stations. UPSS owners are required to comply with relevant provisions of the UPSS Regulation 2019, the *Protection of the Environmental Operations Act 1997* and relevant Australian Standards.

The number of disused UPSS sites in our LGA is expected to increase with greater use of electric vehicles.

The NSW Environmental Protection Authority originally managed a UPSS compliance program across NSW. Responsibility for the compliance of UPSS sites shifted to local government in 2019 with no additional funding or adequate ability to fully cost recover.

Wollongong City Council has implemented a compliance program to meet our statutory responsibilities for UPSS. This compliance program is largely administrative/desktop based to best utilise limited resources and manage risk.

In addition to maintaining a register of UPSS sites and ownership details (a minimum requirement of Councils), WCC also requires operators to submit compulsory leak detection reporting and ground water monitoring results for review. Based on desk top review of these reports further investigation and inspection is undertaken where non-compliance is identified or suspected.

Managing compliance with UPSS legislation will continue to have resource implications for Council. Adequate resources should have been provided when this responsibility was transferred from the NSW Environmental Protection Authority, particularly given concern in the community regarding defunct UPSS sites.

Where a UPSS exists Council's technical staff ensure that appropriate notations are included on Planning Certificates for relevant properties.

RECOMMENDATION

Wollongong City Council write to the Minister for Environment and Heritage to request that funding or additional cost recovery mechanisms be made available to assist Councils to manage compliance with the Underground Petroleum Storage System Regulation 2019 and associated legislation.

ATTACHMENTS

There are no attachments for this report.