

ANNUAL NUTRIENT SURVEY for Local Government Authorities

20 21 City of Cockburn Nutrient Management Score Card



The Swan and Canning River systems, and many wetlands, are suffering from regular, and sometimes toxic, algal blooms. These blooms occur due to excessive inputs of nutrients, particularly phosphorus and nitrogen, combined with low water flows and warm temperatures. Local authorities are responsible for nutrient use and management on turf areas and in reserves, in drainage systems and in local planning decisions and thus have the opportunity to lead the community by setting examples in best practice.

Each year Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Perth are surveyed on their nutrient practices by the Phosphorus Awareness Project of the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL). The survey is broken up into different sections including nutrient monitoring, fertiliser applications, nutrient management, nutrient education, water quality monitoring and development control. The results from the questions asked in the survey have been used to provide a Score Card for each LGA that responded and clearly show how the LGA is performing and where and how improvements can be made. LGAs should also refer to the Annual Nutrient Survey for Local Government Authorities Results 2021 report (www.sercul.org.au/fertilisewise) for further recommendations on how to implement nutrient Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Please note that not all of the questions asked in the survey were used to determine the overall best management practice score. Any additional information about nutrient practices provided by an LGA is summarised at the end of this scorecard.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE SCORE 2021

Overall BMP: **86% EXCELLING**

The City of Cockburn has excelled in implementing nutrient BMPs in 2020/21. Further improvements can be made in the areas of nutrient monitoring, fertiliser applications and nutrient management.

RESPONSE KEY:

BMP has been achieved BMP has NOT been achieved Not Applicable Response not assessed

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (BMP) KEY:

Excelling Above Average Average Below Average Unsatisfactory

NUTRIENT MONITORING

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are regular soil tests &/or leaf tissue analyses conducted in grassed and turf areas?	YES	EXCELLING
Is analysis conducted by a lab affiliated with ASPAC?	YES	
Is plant available phosphorus in the soil measured using an appropriate test?	YES	
Are rates of phosphorus determined by soil testing and Phosphorus Retention Index (PRI) results?	YES	

The City conducts regular leaf tissue analysis and moisture testing of its sports fields and irrigated parks. It also conducts soil tests of new parks, on request. It conducts no soil tests, leaf tissue analysis or moisture testing of foreshore areas or dry grass areas. It is recommended that the City conduct soil and leaf tissue analysis of all fertilised areas and moisture testing of irrigated areas.

FERTILISER APPLICATIONS

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are there foreshore reserves and parks in the LGA?	YES	BELOW AVERAGE
Is fertiliser added to foreshore reserves and parks?	YES	
Does the fertiliser contain phosphorus?	YES	
Is it a controlled release, low water soluble fertiliser?	YES	

Despite stating that foreshore areas are fertilised, no information was provided on the amount of fertiliser that was applied. A buffer zone immediately adjacent to waterbodies should be established in which no fertilising takes place. The width of the buffer zone should be determined by factors such as the site condition and function, however, if possible, it should be at least 50m. Outside the buffer zone, if fertiliser is to be applied it should be a controlled release, phosphorus free, low water soluble fertiliser that is applied according to soil testing and leaf tissue analysis. If the area is irrigated moisture testing should also be performed. In future years information should be provided on the amount of fertiliser that was applied to foreshore areas.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are structural BMPs in place to reduce nutrients entering waterbodies?	YES	ABOVE AVERAGE
Are non-structural measures in place to prevent nutrients from grass clippings entering waterbodies via stormwater drains?	NO	
Are there deciduous trees in parks and streetscapes?	YES	
Are non-structural measures in place to prevent nutrients from deciduous leaves entering waterbodies via stormwater drains?	YES	
Are there non-structural measures in place to prevent nutrients from sediment entering waterbodies via stormwater drains?	YES	
Is a Nutrient and Irrigation Management Plan (NIMP) implemented for streetscapes?	NO	
Is there a policy to use local native plants as the first choice in public (LGA) and private (developers) landscaping?	YES	

It is recommended that the City use BMP measures to prevent nutrients from grass clippings entering waterbodies via stormwater drains (refer to main report for measures that can be implemented). It is recommended that no further deciduous trees be planted on road verges or near waterbodies. A NIMP should be implemented for streetscapes.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are wetlands regularly monitored for nutrient levels?	YES	EXCELLING
Are stormwater drains regularly monitored for nutrient levels?	YES	
Are compensating basins regularly monitored for nutrient levels?	N/A	

It is recommended that the City continue to monitor nutrient levels in their wetlands and stormwater drains. The results of wetland monitoring are reported to the community and it is recommended that the City also report the results of stormwater drain monitoring. The City has no compensation basins within its borders or under its control.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are there provisions in the Town Planning Scheme or Planning Policies to enforce environmental conditions on development?	YES	EXCELLING
Do you impose conditions on development which include Nutrient and Irrigation Management Plans (NIMPs)?	YES	
Do you have mechanisms in place to regulate sediment management?	YES	

It is recommended that the City continue to implement their current practices, including monitoring developments for compliance. If developers are found not to be in compliance they should be prosecuted.

NUTRIENT EDUCATION

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are dog poo bins and bags provided in parks and foreshore reserves?	YES	EXCELLING
Are measures taken to educate the public about not feeding bread to waterbirds in foreshore reserves and parks?	YES	
Are ratepayers provided with advice on best practice in fertiliser management according to soil type?	YES	

It is recommended that the City continue to implement their current practices.