

# ANNUAL NUTRIENT SURVEY for Local Government Authorities



## City of Perth 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 2022 report ([www.sercul.org.au/fertilisewise](http://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 2022

Overall BMP: **76% ABOVE AVERAGE**

The City of Perth has been above average in implementing nutrient Best Management Practices in 2021/22. Further improvements can be made in the areas of fertiliser applications, nutrient management and development control and nutrient education.

### 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 soil tests, leaf tissue analysis and moisture testing at irrigated parks and foreshore areas and it is recommended that this practice continues. If fertiliser is applied in dry grass areas it is recommended that soil tests and leaf tissue analysis is performed in these areas as well.

## FERTILISER APPLICATIONS

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are there foreshore reserves and parks in the LGA?	YES	AVERAGE
Is fertiliser added to foreshore reserves and parks?	YES	
Does the fertiliser contain phosphorus?	NO	
Is it a controlled release, low water soluble fertiliser?	YES	

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 required according to soil testing and leaf tissue analysis, it should be phosphorus free and a controlled release, low water soluble fertiliser if in solid form or applied to foliage. If the area is irrigated moisture testing should also be undertaken. Due to a miscommunication on the part of SERCUL, no fertiliser values were provided by the City.

## 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?	YES	
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?	NO	

It is recommended that no further deciduous trees be planted on road verges or near waterbodies. A NIMP should be implemented for streetscapes and a policy to use local native plants as the first choice in landscaping be enacted.

## 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	

The City regularly monitors wetlands and stormwater drain for nutrient levels, but does not report the results to their local community and it is recommended they adopt this practice. The City reports it doesn't have any compensation basins 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	ABOVE AVERAGE
Do you impose conditions on development which include Nutrient and Irrigation Management Plans (NIMPs)?	NO	
Do you have mechanisms in place to regulate sediment management?	YES	

It is recommended that the City impose conditions requiring NIMPs on developments, monitors these for compliance and prosecutes developers that are not complying. It is recognised that the City is often not the approving authority for large-scale developments in the city (more often being the State Government).

## NUTRIENT EDUCATION

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are dog poo bins and bags provided in parks and foreshore reserves?	YES	ABOVE AVERAGE
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?	NO	

It is recommended that the City provide ratepayers advice on best practice in fertiliser management according to soil type. SERCUL has a Fertilise Wise brochure that can be sourced for free from SERCUL and distributed to ratepayers at LGA locations. The City can also link its website to the Fertilise Wise page of SERCUL's website ([www.sercul.org.au/fertilisewise](http://www.sercul.org.au/fertilisewise)).

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION PROVIDED

A Minimal Level of Sustainable Nutrition (MLSN) program is in place. Irrigation Central Control locks irrigation programs in the event of rainfall events. This not only works to conserve water but ensures turf is not watered past field capacity and reduces nutrient leaching. While the City does not have an endorsed policy on W.A natives as a first choice in public and private landscaping we have a number of high-profile gardens that are thematically planned around using W.A natives and endemic riverine species. The City's spring displays are now W.A native inspired as are the summer displays. As our Verge Assistance Program for residents evolves the first preference for waterwise species will be for W.A natives. West Australian species and endemic plants are a first choice and the City is strongly committed to supporting our unique flora and fauna.