

SECTION 14 INCIDENT REPORT (*Waste Management and Pollution Control Act*)

Date and Time of Notification:	Thursday 18 April 2024, 12:04 hrs
Person / Company:	Power and Water Corporation
Incident:	Discharge of treated sewage effluent from the Lajamanu wastewater stabilisation ponds

<p>(a) the incident causing or threatening to cause pollution</p>	<p><i>i. Description of the waste that was discharged.</i></p> <p>A combination of partially treated and fully treated wastewater.</p> <p><i>ii. Indicative wastewater quality for the discharge.</i></p> <p>It is not possible to provide wastewater quality data for this spill. Based on the pumping discharge, see Appendix B, that occurred to lower pond levels, the effluent is clear and highly diluted by stormwater. The effluent spill is not believed to have had any great environmental impact as it had gone through the treatment ponds, was highly diluted and largely flowed through the effluent disposal irrigation field, alongside a cleared roadway and did not enter any sensitive receiving environment like a natural waterway.</p> <p><i>iii. Volume of the waste that was discharged.</i></p> <p>The volume of wastewater discharged is unknown.</p>
<p>(b) the place where the incident occurred</p>	<p><i>i. Description of the Power & Water asset from which the discharge occurred.</i></p> <p>Lajamanu wastewater stabilisation pond 3 (final pond)</p> <p><i>ii. GPS coordinates of the discharge point from the Power & Water asset, and the final coordinates of the final discharge point.</i></p> <p>Discharge Point 1: 130.6512416E, 18.3412005S (pond 3 wall) Final Discharge Point: 130.6580052E, 18.3420690S (approximate final discharge point)</p> <p>Discharge occurred from the western side of pond 3.</p> <p><i>iii. Indicate any locations nearby to the discharge point where public can gain ready-access, such as public open spaces through which the discharge moves.</i></p> <p>Access by the public to the spill is possible, as the flow path of the spill is along one of the four community access roads (Ducks Ponds Access Road). Initially the spill was confined to within the wastewater</p>

	<p>stabilisation ponds fenced site, however it had then spread to the road. Makeshift warning signage has been erected to advise of the hazard. Access is in the process of being further restricted by use of barricading tape. Although access cannot be completely prevented, especially from the eastern side.</p>
<p>(c) the date and time of the incident</p>	<p><i>i. The time and date of commencement and cessation of the discharge.</i></p> <p>The timing of the overflow is unknown. Access to the facility has been prevented by the impassable road condition. The Utility Services Contract worker (USC), previously known as the Essential Services worker (ESO) responsible for this community only advised the Katherine Power and Water Co-ordinator recently of the overflow. The spill was being managed by pumping down pond levels to a drier area in the irrigation field, with a flexidrive pump, which caused the ponds to stop overflowing around lunchtime 18/04/2024</p> <p><i>ii. How Power & Water were notified or became aware of the discharge.</i></p> <p>The UCSW found that the ponds were overflowing, during a recent site inspection that was unfortunately delayed due to the recent extreme weather and flooding in the area preventing access to the ponds.</p> <p><i>iii. The process by which the discharge occurred.</i></p> <p>The cause of the overflow is recent high rainfall in the area, that led to elevated inflow volumes, exacerbated by a pump that had failed; potentially due to a lack of maintenance being able to be performed in the period of no access i.e., cleaning of filter screens.</p> <p><i>iv. The reason why the discharge occurred.</i></p> <p>As per (c) iii, Very high rainfall in the area.</p>
<p>(d) how the pollution has occurred, is occurring or may occur</p>	<p>As per (c) iii & (c) iv.</p>
<p>(e) the attempts made to prevent, reduce, control, rectify or clean up the pollution or resultant environmental harm caused or threatening to be caused by the incident</p>	<p><i>i. Confirmation signage and fencing has been erected, as appropriate.</i></p> <p>Makeshift signage has already been erected on Duck Ponds Access Road warning of the hazard. Barricading tape or other available materials are being used to further warn of the hazard and reduce the possibility of the public contacting the spill.</p> <p><i>ii. Decontamination of the site as appropriate.</i></p> <p>Site was inspected for any wastewater gross pollutants, of which none were observed, as this is treated wastewater, that has already gone through all three ponds, although the retention time in pond three may have been reduced.</p>
<p>(f) the identity of the person notifying the NT EPA</p>	<p>Power & Water Environmental Services Team on behalf of Water Services</p>

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Appendix A – Location Map with co-ordinates of discharge point and approximate final discharge location.



Appendix B – Photographs of the discharge



Figure 1. Discharge outside of facilities boundary, leading to Duck Ponds Access Road.



Figure 2. Discharge from current pumping to reduce pond levels, showing effluent quality.