Northern Territory Environment Protection Authority

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

Date and Time of Notification:	Tuesday 24th August 2021, 16:40hrs
Person / Company:	Power and Water Corporation (**PWC**)
Incident:	Discharge of treated sewage from sewerage network (Hermannsburg wastewater stabilisation ponds)

(a) the incident causing or threatening to cause pollution

i. Description of the waste that was discharged.

Secondary treated effluent.

ii. Indicative wastewater quality for the discharge.

Indicative wastewater quality can be found in Table 1. This is wastewater quality results from the Hermannsburg waste stabilisation pond #3 outlet.

Table 1

Sample Date	E. Coli (MPN/100mL)	Enterococci (MPN/100mL)
10/08/2021	111,990	473
08/06/2021	24,600	1,830
16/02/2021	9,050	37,300
12/01/2021	3,500	579,400

Location: SHE090 (WQ-HERMANNSBURG POND 3 OUTLET)

iii. Volume of the waste that was discharged.

The volume of wastewater discharged is unknown. No telemetric monitoring occurs at the site of discharge. Based on the communities daily sewage pump station flow on the 23rd August (164KL/day), it is estimated that approximately 500KL was discharged, assuming that the overflow occurred shortly after the last inspection of the site (Fri 20th August 2021).

(b) the place where the incident occurred

i. Description of the PWC asset from which the discharge occurred.

Hermannsburg wastewater stabilisation ponds, pond number 3, emergency discharge point.

ii. GPS coordinates of the discharge point from the PWC asset, and the final coordinates of the final discharge point.

	Discharge Point: 132.7709006E, 23.9387002S (pond 3 overflow point) Final Discharge Point: 132.7709723E, 23.9393036S (small dam) Discharge occurred from the emergency overflow point on pond number three, to a nearby makeshift dam within which the overflow has been captured within. This area will be fenced off to prevent access by the public or livestock until the site has been cleaned up. *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.* Access by the public is possible to the spill location however is not believed to be frequently accessed. The affected area is in the process of being fenced off and signage will also be erected. The dam water has been disinfected with sodium hypochlorite and lime has been applied to the spill site between the discharge point and the dam.
(c) the date and time of the incident	*i. The time and date of commencement and cessation of the discharge.* The exact timing of the overflow is unknown, but would have occurred sometime after the last inspection of the site, which was undertaken on Fri 20th August 2021. Exact date and time of overflow is unknown. The issue was first observed on Tuesday 24th August 2021 around 8:00am, by the Technical Co-ordinator, and was resolved shortly after by 8:15am. *ii. How PWC were notified, or became aware of the discharge.* The Power and Water Technical Co-ordinator responsible for the area called in to the Hermannsburg community on his way back to Alice Springs, and discovered that pond 3 was overflowing. It was noted that the irrigation pump was running but not pumping any effluent to the irrigation area. This mechanical issue was resolved by 8:15am on the 24th August 2021 and the irrigation system re-instated. *iii. The process by which the discharge occurred.* A mechanical failure of a foot-valve on the irrigation pump inlet, resulting in an 'air lock' within the pump, and subsequent failure of the irrigation pump to function properly. This resulted in pond levels to rise and eventually overflow from pond number three, at the emergency overflow discharge point. This 'air lock' was rectified and the pump began to function again and wastewater was sent to the irrigation field, resulting in the overflow ceasing. *iv. The reason why the discharge occurred.* As per (c) iii,
(d) how the pollution has occurred, is occurring or may occur	As per (c) iii & (c) iv.
(e) the attempts made to prevent, reduce, control, rectify or clean up the pollution or resultant	*i. Confirmation signage and fencing has been erected, as appropriate.* The fencing of the small dam structure is now complete. Fencing and signage is currently being installed around the now limed spill site to

environmental harm caused or threatening to be caused by the incident	prevent access. These restrictions will remain in place until all liquid has evaporated and remaining surfaces disinfected appropriately. *ii. Decontamination of the site as appropriate.* Site was inspected for any wastewater gross pollutants, of which none were observed. Site was disinfected with a light sodium hypochlorite spray, with additional lime now having been added to the spill site.
(f) the identity of the person notifying the NT EPA	PWC Environmental Team on behalf of Water Services

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Appendix A – Location Map

Appendix B – Location Photograph – Final discharge point

Photograph taken 24th August 2021