

Tuesday, 3 August 2010

Cargill Abattoir upgrade to reduce odours and improve wastewater quality

The Cargill Abattoir, five kilometres north east of Wagga Wagga, has received planning approval to upgrade its wastewater treatment system, which will reduce odour emissions and improve the quality of wastewater discharged from the facility.

The approved modification to the facility's operations will also see a 20 per cent reduction in the daily cattle processing capacity, further assisting with potential odour and waste management.

The project involves:

- replacing ponds 1 and 2 with two new covered anaerobic ponds, each with a working capacity of 29 megalitres;
- a biogas collection and enclosed gas flare system;
- refurbishment of pond 3 to install a Biological Nutrient Removal System;
- installation of a dewatering system to process the waste activated sludge from the Biological Nutrient Removal System; and
- reducing the kill capacity of the abattoir (from 2000 to 1600 cattle a day), to reflect the capacity of the new wastewater treatment system.

The NSW Department of Planning approved the modification following a thorough assessment of relevant issues, including detailed discussions with Cargill and the Department of Environment, Climate Change and Water (DECCW).

These discussions led to DECCW negotiating a pollution reduction program for the facility requiring better management of odour and effluent, and the now approved modification works are designed to address these issues.

The Department of Planning's Deputy Director-General Richard Pearson said the new wastewater treatment system would deliver an improvement in effluent quality.

"The approved modification has been designed to ensure the facility meets relevant DECCW guidelines and reduce the load on the downstream Bomen Sewage Treatment Plant," Mr Pearson said.

"Odour emissions are also expected to be considerably reduced as a result of the upgrade, with conditions of approval designed to ensure that this does indeed take place."

A total of 104 conditions are attached to the approval, including seven which have been either amended or added as a result of this modification. These include:

- the requirement for a comprehensive odour audit to be undertaken once the wastewater treatment upgrade is operating;

- additional control measures should offensive odour continue to be generated onsite;
- preparation of a revised and comprehensive Effluent Wastewater Management Plan; and
- the requirement for an independent environmental audit to be undertaken within 18 months and every three years thereafter to assess whether the project is being carried out in accordance with industry best practice.

Department of Planning media contact: Paul Searle – (02) 9228 6295.