

Shoalhaven Starches fined \$15,000 by EPA after polluting incident

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FULL TEXT

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has fined Shoalhaven Starches Pty Ltd for an alleged polluting incident. Shoalhaven Starches, located at Bomaderry, are the licenced holders of an Environment Protection Licence for the scheduled activities of general agricultural processing, general chemicals storage and dangerous goods production. On August 4, 2017 the EPA was notified by both Shoalhaven Starches and a call via the EPA's Environment Line that a discharge of diluted starch material had entered Abernathy's Creek.

The EPA attended the premises and collected a number of samples including a white liquid substance.

The results showed elevated levels of organic material in the discharge to Abernathy's Creek.

Shoalhaven Starches advised that this was caused by the partial loss of power to their electronic control systems which resulted in the overflow from the sites internal drainage system into a nearby stormwater drain.

The EPA's acting manager of regional operations Janine Goodwin said Shoalhaven Starches failed to have sufficient measures and procedures in place to contain and prevent the discharge from the premises as a result of the incident.

"The capacity of the sites operational and drainage systems to cope with such an incident should have been recognised as a potential risk," Ms Goodwin said.

"Shoalhaven Starches took immediate steps to mitigate impacts from the discharge, and have taken a number of actions to prevent a recurrence of the incident."

A Manildra Group spokesperson said Shoalhaven Starches fully co-operated with the EPA and had paid the fine.

"On the day of the occurrence, Manildra Group self-reported the loss of containment incident to the EPA and immediately commenced appropriate clean up actions," the spokesperson said.

"Manildra has taken preventive measures including implementing process changes and establishing increased containment infrastructure.

"Manildra has co-operated fully with the EPA throughout the process, and has paid the Penalty Notice."

CREDIT: Madeline Crittenden

DETAILS

Company / organization:	Name: Manildra Group; NAICS: 325193; Name: Environmental Protection Agency--EPA; NAICS: 924110
Identifier / keyword:	Environmental policy; Environmental poison; Disposal
Publication title:	South Coast Register; Nowra, N.S.W.
First page:	0
Publication year:	2018

Publication date:	Jun 5, 2018
Publisher:	Rural Press Pty Ltd Australian Community Media (ACM)
Place of publication:	Nowra, N.S.W.
Country of publication:	Australia
Publication subject:	General Interest Periodicals--Australia
ISSN:	13287664
Source type:	Newspaper
Language of publication:	English
Document type:	News
ProQuest document ID:	2049604304
Document URL:	http://ezproxy.sl.nsw.gov.au/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/anznews/newspapers/s-hoalhaven-starches-fined-15-000-epa-after-xa0/docview/2049604304/sem-2?accountid=13902
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Last updated:	2018-06-04
Database:	Australia & New Zealand Newsstream

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