



DRAFT ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS: ASSESSMENT AND CLASSIFICATION OF LIQUID AND NON-LIQUID WASTES REVIEW

REPORT ON WHAT WE HEARD

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While the 2000 Environmental Standards: Assessment and classification of liquid and non-liquid wastes (the Standards) is overdue for review, it has remained an effective document.

An extensive review of the 2000 Standards has been undertaken, resulting in the Standards being revised to align with the current New South Wales (NSW) guidance. The draft Standards were released for public consultation on 10 March 2021.

Waste generators and waste facility operators use the Standards to classify wastes generated through activities that do not require an environmental authorisation under the *Environment Protection Act 1997* (the Act). The Standards set out how to meet the general environmental duty to ensure that waste management and disposal does not cause environmental harm. The causing of environmental harm is an offence under the Act.

THE CONVERSATION

The ACT community was engaged through various channels.

The draft Standards were available on the Your Say website for an eight-week period from 10 March to 5 May 2021. The community were welcome to submit their views through open feedback submissions available on the Your Say page.

Key stakeholders, including environmental, relevant statutory position holders, government agencies and waste generation, collection, transportation and disposal businesses, were directly invited to comment on the draft Standards. The community were also prompted to engage through social media posts on the Environment, Planning and Sustainable Development Directorate Facebook page.

WHO ENGAGED

Throughout the eight-week consultation, three submissions were received via both email and the Your Say page.

One submission was received via YourSay and two were received via email. Both comments received via email are from businesses in the waste industry. No comments came from individual community members via email. However, the YourSay page did receive 296 views from 245 visits.



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Key insights from the community

Alignment with NSW waste classification guidelines

1. Industry expressed support for the greater alignment of the Standards with comparable NSW waste guidelines to facilitate consistency across the greater Canberra region.
2. Greater emphasis on resource recovery and associated terminology changes were suggested.
3. It was suggested that the unification of ACT waste classification with NSW is a valuable approach that could be consistently applied to incorporate the reuse and recycling framework of excavated natural material.

Infrastructure protection

4. A waste services provider stated that non-domestic liquid wastes entering the sewerage network are a threat to utility assets, sewage treatment, the reuse of products derived from sewage and, ultimately, protection of public health and the environment.

Hazardous and toxic chemicals

5. It was suggested there is a need to prevent hazardous or toxic chemicals from entering an inappropriate disposal or reuse pathway.

Chemical assessment

6. There was strong support for the use of National Association of Testing Authorities accredited laboratories, as in the NSW Waste Classification Guidelines.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The comments have been key to further reviewing and updating the Standards. The ideas and actions that emerged from this consultation will inform the finalisation of the revised Standards.

The ACT Government will now consider the outcomes from this community engagement along with outcomes of other key government consultations. A full community engagement report will be released in coming months.

To find out more about the Environmental Standards: Assessment and classification of liquid and non-liquid wastes review and other initiatives, policies and projects in Canberra visit www.yoursay.act.gov.au or <https://www.environment.act.gov.au/>.



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Key Timings

10 March 2021 – Draft Standards released for public comment

5 May 2021 – Public consultation closed

June 2021 – YourSay report released

August 2021 – Revised Standards released as a finalised document

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FEEDBACK

296

People reached via YourSay

245

People visited the YourSay
page

1

Submission made via
YourSay

37

Key stakeholders were
invited to provide comments

804

People were reached via
social media

2

Likes, comments and shares
were gained via social media