



Media Release

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SYDNEY WATER REQUIRED TO UNDERTAKE PREVENTATIVE WORKS ON DEBRIS BALLS

The NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) has issued a Pollution Reduction Program to Sydney Water requiring a range of significant works, including fat removal from the Malabar Deep Ocean Outfall bulkhead area, to reduce the likelihood of further debris balls washing up on the state's beaches.

This follows the identification of Sydney Water's Malabar Wastewater Treatment System as the likely source of debris balls, that have sporadically washed up on NSW beaches since October 2024.

The requirements on Sydney Water include a range of short, medium and long-term actions including:

- removing the build-up of fats, oils and grease from a hard to access bulkhead area of the Deep Ocean Outfall
- education campaigns for various groups including cafes and restaurants to reduce the amount of fats, oils and grease entering the wastewater system
- long term upgrades at Glenfield and Liverpool treatment plants to take the load off Malabar
- a system to capture debris overflowing from the sewer during severe wet weather events
- a study into the formation and weathering of debris balls to make it easier to track them
- and consideration of AI or other technology to monitor for the formation of debris balls

NSW EPA Executive Director Operations, Steve Beaman, said these changes are a comprehensive response to the issue of debris balls.

"We've strengthened Sydney Water's Environment Protection Licences following a statutory licence review last year which included extensive public consultation," Mr Beaman said.

"Sydney Water is responsible for ensuring it doesn't pollute our beautiful beaches, and this important work is a step towards that.

"Debris balls are a complex problem and the EPA will continue to regulate Sydney Water to protect our precious natural environment."

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