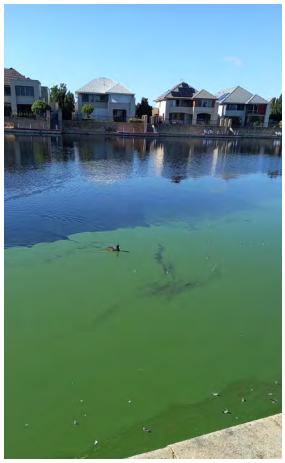
ANNUAL NUTRIENT SCORECARD for Local Government Authorities

2024 Town of Cambridge
Nutrient Management Score Card



The Swan and Canning River systems, and many wetlands, are suffering from regular, and sometimes toxic, algal blooms. These blooms occur due to excessive inputs of nutrients, particularly phosphorus and nitrogen, combined with low water flows and warm temperatures. Local authorities are responsible for nutrient use and management on turfed areas and in reserves, in drainage systems and in local planning decisions and thus have the opportunity to lead the community by setting examples in best practice.

Each year Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in Perth are surveyed on their nutrient practices by the Phosphorus Awareness Project of the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare (SERCUL). The survey is broken up into different sections including nutrient monitoring, fertiliser applications to foreshore areas, nutrient management, water quality monitoring, development control and nutrient education. The results from the questions asked in the survey have been used to provide a Score Card for each LGA that responded and clearly show how the LGA is performing and where and how improvements can be made. LGAs should also refer to www.sercul.org.au/fertilisewise for further recommendations on how to implement nutrient Best Management Practices (BMPs).

Please note that not all of the questions asked in the survey were used to determine the overall best management practice score. Any additional information about nutrient practices provided by an LGA is summarised at the end of this scorecard.

2024 Overall Best Management Practice Score – 95% EXCELLING

The Town of Cambridge has excelled in implementing nutrient BMPs in 2023/24. Further improvements can be made in the areas of nutrient monitoring, fertiliser applications and development controls.

RESPONSE KEY:
BMP has been achieved | BMP has NOT been achieved | Not Applicable | Response not assessed

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICE (BMP) KEY:
Excelling | Above Average | Average | Below Average | Unsatisfactory

NUTRIENT MONITORING

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Were regular soil nutrient tests, soil moisture tests &/or leaf tissue analyses conducted in any grass/turf areas?	YES	EXCELLING
Was analysis conducted by a lab affiliated with ASPAC?	YES	
Was plant available phosphorus in the soil measured using an appropriate test?	YES	
Were rates of phosphorus determined by soil testing and Phosphorus Retention Index (PRI) results?	YES	

The Town performed soil testing and leaf tissue analysis of its sports fields, golf courses and irrigated parks, which were all irrigated. It did not conduct any testing or analysis in foreshore areas, which were irrigated but not fertilised. It is recommended that the Town conduct moisture testing of turf areas that are fertilised and irrigated to ensure leaching of nutrients is not occurring.

FORESHORE FERTILISER APPLICATIONS

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Are there grassed/turfed foreshore areas within the LGA?	YES	EXCELLING
Was fertiliser added to grassed/turfed foreshore reserves?	NO	
Did the fertiliser contain phosphorus?	N/A	
Was it a controlled release solid fertiliser or a liquid fertiliser applied to foliage?	N/A	
Was there a buffer zone around waterbodies in which no fertiliser was applied?	N/A	
Was any nutrient testing completed of foreshore areas?	NO	

The Town did not apply fertiliser to foreshore areas and it is recommended that this practice continue.

General Fertiliser Recommendations:

Baileys Energy Turf was being applied to active turf at rates above the maximum recommended rate for a single application of nitrogen of 40 kg/ha. Calculations should be undertaken to ensure the rates of nitrogen applied are kept below this amount for a single application. Employees involved in turf management may benefit from attending SERCULs Fertilise Wise Fertiliser Training in 2025.

NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Were structural BMPs in place to reduce nutrients entering waterbodies?	YES	EXCELLING
Were non-structural measures in place to prevent nutrients from grass clippings entering waterbodies directly or via stormwater drains?	YES	
Are there deciduous trees in parks and streetscapes?	YES	
Were non-structural measures in place to prevent nutrients from deciduous leaves entering waterbodies directly or via stormwater drains?	YES	
Were non-structural measures in place to prevent nutrients from sediment entering waterbodies directly or via stormwater drains?	YES	
Was a Nutrient and Irrigation Management Plan (NIMP) implemented for streetscapes?	YES	
Was there a policy to use local native plants as the first choice in public (LGA) and private (developers) landscaping?	YES	

It is recommended that the Town continue to implement its current practices, including not planting deciduous trees on verges or near waterbodies.

WATER QUALITY MONITORING

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Were wetlands regularly monitored for nutrient levels?	YES	EXCELLING
Were stormwater drains regularly monitored for nutrient levels?	YES	
Were compensating basins regularly monitored for nutrient levels?	N/A	

The Town regularly monitored nutrient levels in wetlands and stormwater drains, but didn't report the results to the community, which it is recommended that they do. The Town reported having compensating basins under its control, but they are largely dry for most of the year.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Were there provisions in the Town Planning Scheme or Planning Policies to enforce environmental conditions on development?	YES	ABOVE AVERAGE
Did the LGA impose conditions on development which included Nutrient and Irrigation Management Plans (NIMPs)?	NO	
Did the LGA have mechanisms in place to regulate sediment management?	YES	

It is recommended that the Town imposes conditions requiring NIMPs on developments, monitors these for compliance and prosecutes developers that are not complying.

NUTRIENT EDUCATION

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Were dog poo bins and bags provided in parks and foreshore reserves?	YES	EXCELLING
Were measures taken to educate the public about not feeding bread to waterbirds in foreshore reserves and parks?	YES	
Were ratepayers provided with advice on best practice in fertiliser management according to soil type?	YES	
Was education provided about nutrient sources to waterways?	YES	

It is recommended that the Town continue to implement their current practices. SERCUL has relevant information on its website that can be linked to and can be engaged to deliver presentations about nutrients and their impact on waterways to schools, business and community groups through its Phosphorus Awareness Project. For more information on this education program and how it can assist the Town with nutrient education contact Natasha Bowden on 9458 5664.

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