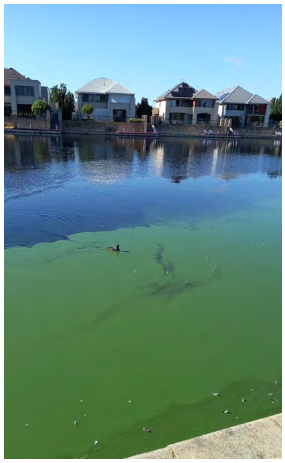
ANNUAL NUTRIENT SCORECARD for Local Government Authorities

2024 City of South Perth
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 City of South Perth has excelled in implementing nutrient Best Management Practices in 2023/24.
Further improvements can be made in the areas of fertiliser applications, nutrient management and water quality monitoring.

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 City conducted soil tests, leaf tissue analysis and moisture testing of the areas it fertilised and irrigated which included its golf courses and sports fields. They did not fertilise irrigated grass areas in 2023/24 due to the results obtained during testing undertaken in 2022/23. It is recommended that regular testing and analysis continue in all areas that are fertilised and irrigated.

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

General Fertiliser Recommendations:

Carbon Coated Urea fertiliser was applied to kikuyu active turf at rates more than double the maximum recommended single application rate of nitrogen of 40 kg/ha. As it is a controlled release fertiliser higher rates may be acceptable, It is recommended that fertiliser only be applied in spring and autumn as summer fertilising encourages the overuse of water and turf may grow excessively, while fertiliser applied during winter can be washed into stormwater drains or leached into groundwater. Many grass species are also dormant or semi-dormant in winter. 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?	NO	
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 City implement a NIMP for streetscapes and continue 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?	YES	

It is recommended that the City continue their water quality monitoring program, but should report all water quality monitoring results to the community.

DEVELOPMENT CONTROL

QUESTION	RESPONSE	SECTION BMP
Were there provisions in the Town Planning Scheme or Planning Policies to enforce environmental conditions on development?	YES	EXCELLING
Did the LGA impose conditions on development which included Nutrient and Irrigation Management Plans (NIMPs)?	YES	
Did the LGA have mechanisms in place to regulate sediment management?	YES	

It is recommended that the City continue to implement their current practices, including monitoring developments for compliance. If developers are found not to be in compliance they should be prosecuted.

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 City continue to implement their current practices. SERCUL 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 City with nutrient education contact Natasha Bowden on 9458 5664.

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2024 Annual Nutrient Score cards available at www.sercul.org.au/fertilisewise