



Chemical use in the MIA

MI takes our responsibility seriously and undertakes water quality monitoring for all required drainage discharges from the MIA.

Murrumbidgee Irrigation (MI) holds an Environmental Protection Licence (EPL 4951) for irrigation activities in the MIA. Under the licence, in addition to controlling and recording our own chemical use (eg. for vegetation management), we are also required to monitor the quality of water that leaves the MIA through one of the five recognised discharge points.

The licence is issued under the Protection of the Environment Operations (POEO) Act, 1997, and regulated by the NSW Environmental Protection Authority (EPA). A copy is available on our website as well as the EPA's public register.

MI takes our responsibility seriously and undertakes water quality monitoring for all required drainage discharges from the MIA, as well as other testing which may arise due to enquiries, regular internal monitoring and in response to incidents, complaints or other unexpected events. EPL monitoring results are published on our website. We also publish an Annual Compliance Report which demonstrates how we meet our monitoring and reporting requirements.

The EPA-listed chemicals we are required to monitor are shown below and include chemicals often used by our customers in their agricultural activities.

The extract EPL 4951 18 August 2021 – Table E3.1 Notification levels and Action levels for chemicals

Chemical	Notification Level (µg/L)	Action Level (µg/L)
Atrazine	13	45
Chlorpyrifos	0.01	0.11
Diazinon	0.01	0.2
Diuron	0.2	1.0
Malathion	0.05	0.2
Metolachlor	0.46	2.6
Molinate	3.4	14
Simazine	3.2	11
Thiobencarb	2.8	4.6
Trifluralin	2.6	4.4

The EPA may amend these limits and / or add chemicals from time to time in response to new information. We also monitor for other pollutants including turbidity, conductivity, nitrogen and phosphorus.

Should we find that specified chemical limits have been exceeded, MI is required to notify the EPA and then to further investigate the source of elevated chemical levels.

Investigations can include site inspections, additional water sampling from customers' drainage inlets and discussions with customers who discharge into our network upstream of our discharge locations.

When an investigation is required, we endeavour to work with customers to resolve the cause of the raised level. Should ongoing or deliberate breaches of the limits occur, we are required to notify the EPA who may then commence their own investigation and take further action as appropriate.

WHERE TO GET INFORMATION

www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/123317/weed-control-handbook.pdf - NSW Weed Control Handbook, DPI 2018

www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/pesticides/pesticides-nsw-overview - NSW EPA's Pesticide information and resources

<https://apvma.gov.au/node/10811> - APVMA Using Chemicals

Your agronomist, chemical supplier and/or the relevant State or Federal Department can also provide advice to ensure you comply with the relevant requirements.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The POEO Act, 1997, is intended to protect the environment from operations that may cause harm and it applies to everyone. With respect to chemical use:

- Follow all conditions or instructions provided in the chemical manufacturer's labelling, APVMA permits and/or best practice guidelines and operator licences.
- If there is a risk of applied or spilt chemicals remaining in farm drainage waters, you must retain water on farm for 28 days and/or treat these waters until any residual levels are below legal guidelines before discharging into MI drains. See MI Drainage Use Rules on our website.
- If an on-farm incident occurs that may threaten or cause environmental harm, you must advise both the relevant authority (either Council or EPA depending on the situation) and MI of the event.
- Contact us on 6962 0200 for advice on managing your drainage discharge.