

## SCOTLAND ISLAND COMMUNITY CALL TO ACTION



### **STOP THE ISLAND POO FROM HURTING YOU!**

#### **Your health is at risk – ACT NOW!**

Scotland Islanders are facing serious health threats from sewage run-off. You and your family risk contracting *urinary tract infections, meningitis* and other serious mosquito-borne diseases like *Ross River* and *Dengue Fevers*. Sewage run-off is a public health risk in Pittwater through exposure to pooled effluent, contaminated soils and indirect exposure in waterways.

#### **AND IT'S GETTING WORSE!**

***A study commissioned by SIRA found Faecal Coliform levels are 645 times above the recommended safety level & Enterococci Levels are 2,600 times.***

To make matters worse, ***Sydney Water*** is about to ***break a promise*** to our community to provide waste water infrastructure to Scotland Island.

#### **WE CAN'T LET THIS HAPPEN**

Since 2000, Scotland Island has been listed in the Priority Sewerage Program (PSP) in Sydney Water's [Operating Licence for 2010-15](#). For the past five years we've been waiting for the detailed plans so we could engage our community in an informed discussion about their options.

***Now Sydney Water is seeking through [IPART](#) to remove Scotland Island for the following reasons from its Priority Sewerage Program!***

The range of our options is being **severely threatened!**

**WE NEED YOU TO ACT THIS WEEK -- in the interest of everyone's health and safety**

***Write a letter this week*** to our local State member **Rob Stokes** and to the other parties listed below. They need to hear from you -- see ***Call to Action*** below!

# SCOTLAND ISLAND COMMUNITY CALL TO ACTION

## CALL TO ACTION

***We need every resident and/or household to write a letter*** demanding that the commitment to provide sewerage to Scotland Island should not be broken. The letters should be addressed to the contacts listed at the end of this ***Scotland Island Community Call to Action***. *SIRA needs to tally responses, so could you let us know and/or send a copy of your letter to [president@sira.org.au](mailto:president@sira.org.au)*

***We need every resident and/or household to write a letter***

**Below are some points you may wish to consider:**

- The current NSW Government and Sydney Water are breaking their long-standing commitment to provide waste water infrastructure to Scotland Island under the Priority Sewerage Program.
- Because residents of Scotland Island have been waiting for 15 or more years for this promised infrastructure, they have not pursued other opportunities to manage their waste water. Many of these options are now much more expensive
- Significant health and environmental issues aggravated by the current situation affect not only Scotland Island residents, but ***all*** users of Pittwater.
- An earlier scientific study of waste water on Scotland Island indicated that, after rain storms, puddles on the roads and run-off into Pittwater is contaminated with nutrients and bacteria dangerously above accepted health and safety standards.
- Many young families have moved onto Scotland Island and are at risk.
- Since the 1990s most of the developed areas in Pittwater, including Bayview and Church Point, have been provided with mains water and sewerage services. Scotland Island is one of the last remaining un-sewered areas on the Northern Beaches.
- An un-sewered suburb that pollutes one of the world's best waterways ***is not acceptable***.
- For more than 60 years, Development Applications have been approved for housing developments on Scotland Island. Despite this, island ratepayers have not enjoyed the same services and infrastructure accorded the rest of the Northern Beaches suburbs.
- Please include your own aesthetic and health experiences of our current waste water septic systems within your letter.

## BRIEF BACKGROUND

The Martens and Associates study, [\*Australian On-site Waste Water Strategies: A case study of Scotland Island\*](#) conducted in 1996-97, reported that storm water run-off on the island is contaminated with both nutrients and bacteria, indicating severe sewage run-off pollution. Bacterial levels are extremely high, significantly exceeding ANZECC guidelines for surface water and in the salt water estuaries.

- **[Faecal Coliform levels](#)** were measured at levels between 96,850 to 58,475 Colony Forming Units per 100 mL. The recommended ANZECC safety level being a maximum of 150 Units per 100 mL. That is **up to 645 times above the recommended safety level**.
- Even more concerning was that **[Enterococci levels](#)** (that can lead to urinary tract infections, bacteremia, endocarditis, diverticulitis, and meningitis) were measured at levels between 91,207 to 51,869 organisms per 100 mL. The recommended safe level being a maximum of 35 Organisms per 100 mL. That is, up to **2,600 times above the ANZECC safety level**.

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[As recorded in Hansard in May 2000 in the NSW Parliament](#), the then local member John Brogden asked the Labor Minister for Energy and Utilities, Kim Yeadon: “When will Sydney Water connect mains water and sewer to **Scotland Island**?” The Minister replied: “To address some of the long-term issues in supplying sewerage services to un-sewered areas in Sydney Water's areas of operations, I have required that Sydney Water develop an overall strategic plan ... The provision of sewerage services and reticulated water services to **Scotland Island** will be considered as part of that Plan.”

In January 2011, just prior to becoming the Premier of NSW [Barry O'Farrell wrote](#): “The NSW Liberals and Nationals will fast-track the connection of sewerage ... clearing most of the Keneally Labor Government's Priority Sewerage Program backlog, ... We will also ensure remaining areas such as Austral, West Hoxton, Menangle, Menangle Park, Nattai and **Scotland Island** are connected to the sewer as a matter of priority ... .”

In December 2012, the NSW Government [Northern Beaches Regional Action Plan](#) made a clear commitment to “Better manage waste water and improve ocean water quality including upgrades to waste water and sewerage treatment facilities for **Scotland Island**”, (page 13). And also “The provision of wastewater services to **Scotland Island** is a matter of priority ...” (page 14).

As set out in their 2013-14 Annual Report, Sydney Water's Equity is over \$6.4 billion, their annum income was \$2.6 billion and their profit \$464 million.

### ADDRESS YOUR LETTERS TO:

#### **The Hon. Rob Stokes, MP**

Member for Pittwater  
Minister for the Environment  
1725 Pittwater Road  
Mona Vale 2103  
[ElectorateOffice.Pittwater@parliament.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ElectorateOffice.Pittwater@parliament.nsw.gov.au)

#### **The Hon. Kevin Humphries, MP**

Minister for Natural Resources, Lands and Water  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney 2001  
<http://www.nsw.gov.au/ministercontactform/natural-resources-lands-water-western-nsw>

#### **The Hon. Mike Baird, MP**

Premier and Minister for Infrastructure,  
GPO Box 5341  
Sydney 2001  
<https://www.nsw.gov.au/your-government/contact-premier-new-south-wales>

#### **The Hon. Jillian Skinner MP**

Minister for Health  
GPO Box 5341  
SYDNEY NSW 2001  
[office@skinner.minister.nsw.gov.au](mailto:office@skinner.minister.nsw.gov.au)

#### **Hugo Harmstorf**

Chief Executive Officer  
Independent Pricing and Review Tribunal  
Level 15, 2-24 Rawson Place  
SYDNEY NSW 2000  
[ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ipart@ipart.nsw.gov.au)

#### **Barry Buffier**

Chief Executive Officer  
NSW Environment Protection Authority  
PO Box A290,  
Sydney South 1232  
[barry.buffier@epa.nsw.gov.au](mailto:barry.buffier@epa.nsw.gov.au)

## SCOTLAND ISLAND COMMUNITY CALL TO ACTION

### Mark Ferguson

General Manager

Pittwater Council

PO Box 882

Mona Vale 1660

[ashleigh\\_sherry@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ashleigh_sherry@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)

### All Councillors:

Pittwater Council

PO Box 882

Mona Vale 1660

- Jacqueline Townsend, Mayor - [jacqueline\\_townsend@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:jacqueline_townsend@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)
- Kyle Ferguson, Deputy Mayor - [kylie\\_ferguson@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kylie_ferguson@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)
- Julie Hegarty - [julie\\_hegarty@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:julie_hegarty@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)
- Kay Millar - [kay\\_millar@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:kay_millar@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)
- Sue Young - [sue\\_young@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:sue_young@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)
- Ian White - [ian\\_white@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:ian_white@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)
- Bob Grace - [bob\\_grace@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:bob_grace@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)
- Alex McTaggart - [alex\\_mctaggart@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:alex_mctaggart@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)
- Selena Griffith - [selena\\_griffith@pittwater.nsw.gov.au](mailto:selena_griffith@pittwater.nsw.gov.au)

***DON'T FORGET SIRA needs to tally responses, so we would appreciate you letting us know that you have sent a letter and/or sending a copy of your letter to [president@sira.org.au](mailto:president@sira.org.au)***