

**Question on Notice
No. 8
Asked on 6 February 2007**

QUESTION:

MR WELLINGTON asked the Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism (Ms Nelson-Carr)—

With reference to Maroochy Shire Council's proposal to site a Bioreactor landfill north of Nambour at Kulangoor—

- (1) By way of comparison, what guidelines did the Environmental Protection Agency rely on to approve the Ti Tree Bioreactor located at Willowbank?
- (2) What other Bioreactor landfill businesses have been licensed and approved in Queensland?
- (3) Will she ensure that before considering the Maroochy Shire Council's applications, that the department has the most up to date and comprehensive guidelines covering the issues of siting, design, construction, operation and rehabilitation of bioreactor landfills?

ANSWER:

- (1) There is little difference between a conventional landfill and a bioreactor landfill. Both landfill types allow gases to be captured during the degradation of wastes. These gases can be used to generate electricity. In a bioreactor the process of pumping moisture through the enclosed waste mass speeds waste breakdown and provides more efficient and controlled energy capture that distinguishes it from traditional landfills.

The EPA guideline on siting, design, operation and rehabilitation criteria for new landfills represents the minimum criteria that a prospective developer needs to address and does not preclude other sources of best practice information from being considered during the EPA's assessment of any new landfill proposal. This guideline provided the basis for the EPA's assessment of the Ti Tree Bioreactor.

- (2) Bioreactor landfill technology is not new, and has been adopted throughout the world. In Australia, the Cooperative Research Centre for Waste Management and Pollution Control and the University of Queensland, among others, have researched this technology dating back to 1994. Bioreactor landfills are considered best practice technology and have recently been developed at Woodlawn in New South Wales, as well as the Ti Tree Bioreactor facility near Ipswich in Queensland. I am unaware of any other such facilities in Queensland.

- (3) The EPA guideline on siting, design, operation and rehabilitation criteria for new landfills is considered to be appropriate for assessing bioreactor landfill proposals. The Maroochy Shire Council will need to demonstrate that it can satisfy these criteria and any additional best practice requirements that the EPA places upon it.