

Boral Cement Berrima

More than 90 years of growing the Southern Highlands and NSW

October 2019

Soon after our last newsletter was issued during June, the Berrima Cement Works received increased feedback about dust coming from the site. In this edition, we outline what happened and what we've been doing to decrease the risk of dust affecting neighbours.

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Dealing with dust...

During the last week of June, the Cement Works received an unusual amount of calls about dust settling in New Berrima. Despite the potential sources in the local area, this dust was traced back to our site.

The cause was the premature failure of **three** out of **144 dust filter bags** fitted to one of our **dust collectors** in **Cement Mill 6**. As a result, dust vented through an **exhaust outlet** some **12 metres** off the ground, beyond the normal line of sight for both our workers and security cameras.



There was initial difficulty in quickly locating the issue given the prevailing **weather** at the time. **Low fog**, **light rain** and brisk **southerly winds** all combined to make the dust very hard to see inside the site.

Once identified, however, we moved quickly to **replace** the failed filter bags. By **4 July**, we had replaced **all** filter bags as an added precaution.

The next day, we distributed a **letter** to New Berrima locals to update on what had happened. This drew more feedback, allowing us to assist with the cleaning of multiple vehicles.

We also reported the whole 'event' to the **NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA)**, with which we worked on a preferred course of action.

By the time our annual **Whole of Community meeting** was held in Mittagong on **25 July**, a lot had been done to try and fix the situation. However, it was evident from the comments of those who attended that much more work needed to be done.



Prevention planning...

Managing 'coarse' or 'nuisance' dust at any industrial site, especially those dealing with raw materials, is always a challenge. This is largely due to the volume of materials being used, and the generally wide, open exposed spaces around the site.

Despite this, through various **operating approvals**, businesses like ours have a responsibility to ensure such dust **does not** unduly affect those living and working around the subject facility.



More information? www.boral.com.au/berrimacement.

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For this reason, the events of June-July and subsequent community feedback prompted us to immediately review our **preventative** and **reactive** procedures for those times dust from the Cement Works could interfere with our neighbours.

One major outcome was the inclusion in our draft **Air Quality Management Plan (AQMP)** of a **Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP)** section.

As suggested by the name, the TARP sets out the conditions which, if they occur, will likely generate dust effects on our neighbours. This includes **weather conditions**, **materials movements** and even **stockpile placement**.

By recognising these conditions early, the TARP will **'trigger'** preventative action among the site team. It may be that certain activities stop until weather has passed, or materials are used from a different part of the site until things improve.

So it doesn't just become another 'piece of paper', **all** Cement Works staff will be **trained** in the requirements of the TARP. They are also being instructed on the better addressing of any feedback the site receives during **any** 'event', not just dust.



The information these monitoring devices collect is shared at our **public meetings**, and can be viewed on the **Boral website** at www.boral.com.au/poeladata.

'Real time' monitoring allows not only an additional data gathering option – it sends information to the site **as it happens**, allowing our team to **act** before things start becoming an issue.

Solution for solar panels

During our Whole of Community Meeting in July, we were asked to provide guidance on the cleaning of solar panels affected by dust from the site.

As a result, we committed to look into it and have been in contact with several **local solar panel suppliers** to come up with an answer.

Unfortunately, the issue appears more complex than first thought. Due to the **variability in construction** and **materials used**, it's been recommended to us there's **no single solution** to cleaning the panels.

We've been informed the best option is for each property owner to **contact the retailer** and/or **manufacturer** of their panels to find out the most appropriate course of action.

Despite this, **we** will continue our research to see if a more **definitive** answer is available.

Further, we were asked the name of the product local **car detailers** used to clean vehicles affected by dust from the site during June. The solution is called **Congo Low Hazard Concrete Remover**.

In offering this advice, we'd like to remind residents that Boral **cannot** recommend any particular product for cleaning.

Of course, if at any time you feel your vehicle has been affected by our operations, please contact us **immediately** via **4860 2222**. We'll then organise one of our team attend your premises for an inspection and further discussion.



Beyond the TARP, the revision of the draft AQMP has also led to us planning a **feasibility trial** of a **'real time monitoring'** program during **2020**.

Our operating approvals already require us to conduct an extensive range of monitoring for not just **dust levels**, but also the **make up** of any dust produced by the Cement Works operations.

You may have seen the **dust bottles** which ring New Berrima as part of our monitoring network, or the **High Volume Air Sampler (HVAS)** next to Berrima Road.

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