

Media release

From the Office of the Environmental Monitor

Wednesday, 20 May, 2009

TURBIDITY STAYS BELOW DREDGING LIMITS

Turbidity levels in Port Phillip Bay stayed below the Channel Deepening Project's environmental limits last week, Environmental Monitor Mick Bourke said today.

"Last week the *Queen of the Netherlands* continued dredging clean sand from the South Channel. The sand was used to cap the bund that holds contaminated sediment removed from the north of the Bay and the Yarra River," Mr Bourke said.

"The Office of the Environmental Monitor has analysed the latest turbidity monitoring program results.

"Data from 11 conformance turbidity meters operating throughout the Bay shows that none of the environmental limits set to protect the Bay's sensitive plants and animals were reached last week," he said.

Turbidity results released today cover a seven day period from 11 to 17 May, 2009 and can be viewed at www.oem.vic.gov.au/Turbiditymonitoring.

Mr Bourke also said results from EPA Victoria's Beach Monitoring Program showed good water quality at Bay beaches.

"Around the Bay 36 beaches were tested for bacteria, heavy metals, organic chemicals and algae last week," Mr Bourke said.

"The latest available results indicate that all beaches were within guideline levels for all parameters.

"As a general precaution, EPA Victoria advises people not to swim near stormwater drains, rivers, streams and other outlets into the Bay during and for at least 24 hours after rainfall."

Weekly results on beach water quality are available from (www.oem.vic.gov.au and www.epa.vic.gov.au/water/beach_monitoring).

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