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Date of submission: Monday, 16 April 2018

Submission: Solo Water, who operate the sewerage treatment plant for the Beaches estate, has applied to IPART for an amendment to its licence that would allow them to discharge treated effluent to an area outside the boundaries of the Beaches estate. This is a significant variation that must not be allowed on public health and environmental grounds and should be strongly opposed by the local community.

The existing licence has no allowance for liquid discharge from the site, and solid or sludge discharge as a by-product of the process is to be carted from the site for remediation. They are now asking for a liquid discharge into the environment. The application proposes that up to 160,000 litres per day of treated effluent could be discharged to the north of the Beaches estate and would flow to the creek, and from there into the lagoon, and onto the beach at Catherine Hill Bay.

Currently the treated effluent is sprayed over areas 6 & 7 of the Beaches development. Now that they want to sell the land for housing they are faced with a problem (of their own making). The cheapest and easiest solution is to dump this treated effluent into the Catherine Hill Bay creek/lagoon. My children swim in this lagoon, particularly when the surf is rough and too dangerous.

This Solo Water Review of Environmental Factors (REF) amendment is a significant departure from the original operating licence procedures both in respect of the treatment process, and that the treated effluent would now be discharged outside of the Beaches subdivision boundaries. We believe that operating licence changes of this magnitude should trigger a full environmental impact assessment, not an amendment to an existing REF. I am strongly opposed to this.