



Perth Voice
23-Apr-2011
Page: 3
General News
By: Stephen Pollock
Market: Perth
Circulation: 38438
Type: Suburban
Size: 149.39 sq.cms
Frequency: ----F--



• Maylands MP
Lisa Baker.

Audit fears

by STEPHEN POLLOCK

A LACK of funding for the environmental auditing of light industry in Bayswater is putting the Swan River at risk says Maylands MP Lisa Baker.

"Last year the government cut the Swan River Trust's funding by a staggering \$1 million," the Labor MP said. "They also failed to fund the Perth Region NRM's highly successful program to audit the waste disposal practices of light industry—small businesses such as garages, panel beaters and chemical storage facilities.

"The Bayswater industrial area, in particular, is very close to ground water so ensuring that the businesses there safely dispose of chemicals, oils and heavy metals, rather than pour them down drains, is vital."

The NRM light industry audit program started in 2005 with \$2.7 million funds from the federal government. It funded eight councils, including Bayswater, in a pilot program for 2.5 years to conduct environmental audits of small businesses.

Once the federal money dried up councils were left to themselves.

Perth Region NRM CEO Linda Soteriou says the Swan River Trust handed over \$500,000 last year for environmental audits through Welshpool, Gosnells and Malaga.

"That funding comes to an end this June and unless we can secure some more cash from the Department of Environment and Conservation it will be back to local councils doing it themselves."

Ms Soteriou says Perth Region NRM has so far audited 7000 small businesses, with some 35 per cent found non-compliant.