



Councillor Brendan Blomeley
Mayor
Clarence City Council

9 July 2024

Dear Mayor,

I write to request the Council to reinstate its pre-COVID practices regarding the de-sludging of wastewater systems, for South Arm Peninsula properties in the catchment of Pipe Clay Lagoon.

Beginning in 2020-21 and accelerating since then, oyster farmers in Pipe Clay Lagoon have detected some blue-green algae and increased E coli, have observed a proliferation of seagrass, and have suffered extremely poor oyster growth and distressing mass oyster mortalities.

We are concerned that leakage from wastewater systems has been and is contributing to these outcomes. We have undertaken a wide range of tests that have not revealed other causes of the oyster stagnation and mortalities.

Some wastewater systems on South Arm Peninsula are regulated systems, in that they are subject to permits or accreditations that require periodic de-sludging. Many others are not.

Prior to COVID, Clarence City Council routinely reminded the owners of regulated systems of their de-sludging responsibilities, and checked that de-sludging occurred. Council also converted unregulated systems into regulated systems by imposing conditions to periodically de-sludge wastewater systems whenever Council was engaged in property transfers or development approvals.

We ask that these practices be reinstated.

It is a hallmark of civilisation that communities manage their human waste, and the residents, businesses, and environment on the South Arm Peninsula deserve no less.

The oyster farmers of Pipe Clay Lagoon, and Oysters Tasmania on their behalf, are happy to meet with you, with Council, and with Council staff at any time to discuss.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Duncan Spender".

Duncan Spender
CEO, Oysters Tasmania