

Opal Australian Paper Maryvale Mill update

Wood supply issue

In November 2022, court orders were handed down against VicForests, which is a state government business that supplied Opal's Maryvale Mill with the wood used to produce white copy paper.

While these court orders remain in place, VicForests is unable to harvest and supply wood to the Mill. The Victorian Government has now announced that VicForests will cease forestry operations permanently from 1 January 2024.

Despite Opal's best efforts, we were unable to source viable alternative wood supplies to replace the shortfall from VicForests.

As a result, in February 2023, due to this unplanned situation, Opal made the difficult decision to permanently stop white paper production at the Mill.

Although the Mill is no longer producing white copy paper, it is continuing to manufacture brown paper and board to meet the growing demand for cardboard packaging.

Maryvale Mill temporary authorisation to adjust some EPA Victoria licence limits – December 2022

As a result of necessary changes to the Mill's operations caused by the lack of wood, Opal applied to EPA Victoria seeking temporary relief on certain elements of its environmental operating licence for 120 days. This included expert assessment of potential impacts of the operational changes, to confirm no significant risks would be present at the revised temporary limits.

This temporary authorisation was granted by EPA Victoria on 22 December 2022.

On 22 February 2023, emissions of oxides of sulphur (SOx) from the Recovery Boiler at the site were 5,440 grams per minute (g/m) versus the limit of 5,000 g/m.

As a consequence, EPA advised the Mill that its temporary licence limits ceased to have effect from 24 March 2023. The Maryvale Mill then reverted back to its current EPA Operating Licence.



Opal takes its environmental obligations very seriously and is proactively engaging with EPA to ensure it meets compliance requirements and manages risk of harm to the environment and human health.

Opal took swift action to address the compliance of SO_x emissions, including improving operating conditions and installing equipment that assisted in reducing SO_x emissions. A review was undertaken by air quality consultants, which identified it is unlikely the SO_x concentration recorded on 22 February 2023 or the increased temporary limit impacted the environment or human health.

Application for second temporary authorisation to adjust some EPA licence limits

Following the completion of these additional improvement actions, Opal submitted an application for a second temporary authorisation to EPA on 13 April 2023 (Authorisation of Discharges and Disposal (ADD)).

The specific temporary licence discharge limit amendments requested are:

- Recovery Boiler R6 air emissions of oxides of sulfur (as SO_x) maximum increased from 2,500 g/min to 5,000 g/min during periods when Recovery Boiler R5 is offline (R5 Operating Licence limit is 2,920 g/min).
- Recovery Boiler R5 air emissions of oxides of sulfur (as SO_x) maximum increased from 2,920 g/min to 5,000 g/min during periods when Recovery Boiler R6 is offline (R6 licence limit is 2,500 g/min).
Note: Only one boiler will be operating at a time.
- The 90th Percentile air emission limits for oxides of sulfur (as SO_x) limits will not apply during the temporary ADD period.
- Wastewater Treatment Plant Discharge to the Latrobe River Colour maximum increased from 200 PCU to 250PCU.
- The River colour annual median limit will not apply during the temporary ADD period.

All other discharge emissions licence limits remain unchanged.

EPA Victoria is currently reviewing the submission and we hope to have a response soon.

- Questions about Opal Australian Paper's Operating Licence can be emailed to: communications@opalanz.com
- For further updates please visit our website <https://opalanz.com/news-media/>

