
Frequently Asked Questions

In the week beginning 19th February, a product called Phoslock™ will be applied to Brickworks, Brearley and Bungana lakes. The purpose of this memo is to explain the reason for Phoslock application and the effect that it will have on the Lakes.

What is Phoslock?

Phoslock™ is a modified clay that binds to soluble phosphorus thereby making it unavailable to algae. It helps to control the growth of algae by limiting one of the essential nutrients. Phoslock™ is a commercially available product that was developed by CSIRO and the Water and Rivers Commission in West Australia

Why was it applied?

The lakes within the Maylands precinct experience periodic algal blooms. One of the drivers of these blooms is excessive levels of nutrients, particularly soluble phosphorus. Phoslock™ is to be applied to Brickworks, Brearley and Bungana lakes as a mechanism to help reduce soluble phosphorus levels, and therefore help to prevent algal blooms.

What does Phoslock do?

Phoslock™ works in two ways. Firstly, it absorbs any soluble phosphorus contained in the water body itself as it sinks to the bottom. Then, once it has passed through the water column, it forms a layer on the sediment of the water body that effectively traps any soluble phosphorus that is released into the overlying water.

Once bound within Phoslock's clay matrix, the phosphorus remains bound over a wide range of environmental conditions. By reducing soluble phosphorus levels Phoslock™ can help limit nuisance algal blooms by starving them of the nutrients they require.

What does Phoslock not do?

Application of Phoslock™ does not remove or kill algae blooms. It is non-toxic and does not harm animals or plants. Application of Phoslock™ does not guarantee that algal blooms will not occur, however, it is a very effective measure of reducing soluble phosphorus levels, which are one of the drivers of algal blooms and poor water quality.

The application of Phoslock™ is just one action being implemented as part of the City's response to improve water quality in the Maylands Lakes.