

Lead Mitigation Grant Program

Guidelines for Applicants

The NSW Government has provided funding to eligible North Lake Macquarie land owners and tenants who have been adversely impacted by lead contamination resulting from the former Pasmaenco Cockle Creek Smelter.

This Guideline outlines the distribution of these grant funds for residents who reside in the Lead Abatement Strategy (LAS) area (Figure 1) and have been impacted by lead contamination.

Grants are available to fund activities that reduce and/or manage legacy lead contamination at residential properties, and are paid as reimbursements unless otherwise specified.

Applications are prioritised according to the associated level of health, environmental or financial risk, and are subject to funding being available.

Applicants who meet the criteria and have undertaken relevant activities since 1 July 2018 are eligible for reimbursement. Works undertaken prior to 1 July 2018 may still be eligible for reimbursement and will be assessed on a case-by-case basis.

The Lead Mitigation Grants are offered at least quarterly, and will operate until 30 June 2022.

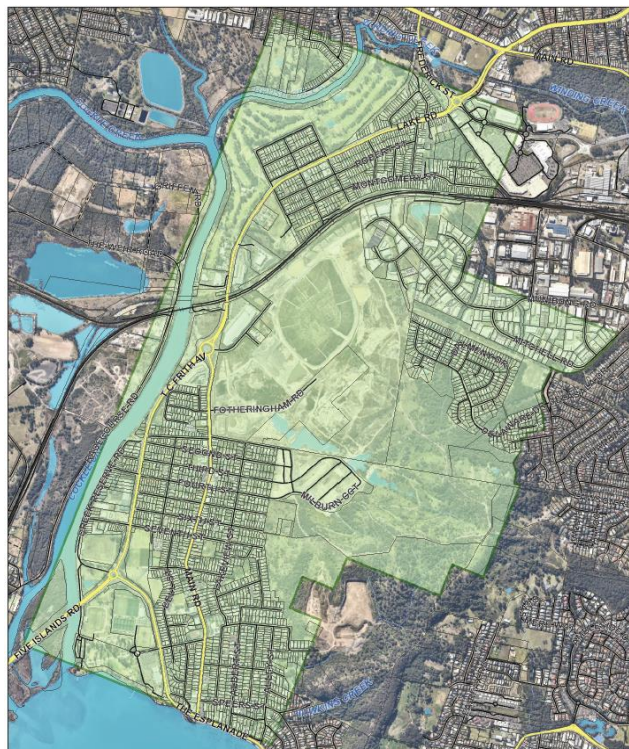


Figure 1: Lead Abatement Strategy (LAS) grid

Application assessment criteria

All grant applications received on time will be assessed according to the criteria outlined below by an appointed Grants Panel.

The Lake Macquarie Lead Mitigation Grants Panel consists of an NSW EPA

representative, two Council staff representatives and one community representative. The Panel will assess applications against the criteria listed below and then disburse funding for approved activities.

Lead Mitigation Grant assessment criteria

A. Eligibility criteria

Applicants must meet these criteria in order to be considered by the assessment panel

- › Any residential land owner or tenant living within the Lead Abatement Strategy (LAS) grid (Figure 1).

B. Assessment criteria

(i) Applicants satisfying the following health risk criteria are given priority for funding

- › An application relates to a person with a confirmed blood lead level of ≥ 5 mg/dL and who resides at a property with lead in soil concentrations of more than 300ppm.
- › A application relates to children under five years of age who display pica and who resides at a property with lead in soil at concentrations of more than 300ppm.

(ii) The following activities are eligible for funding

- › Temporary housing while a property undergoes remediation where an acute health risk related to legacy lead contamination is identified.
- › Remediation of land contaminated by lead where an acute health risk related to legacy lead contamination is identified.
- › Testing of soil to confirm contamination status, where the status is unknown.
- › Assistance with Remedial Action Plans prepared by a suitably qualified consultant.
- › Assistance with validation reports prepared by a suitably qualified consultant.
- › Assistance with costs of tipping fees associated with disposal contaminated soil.
- › Assistance with maintaining capping over legacy lead contaminated soil.
- › Assistance with installation of raised garden beds.



Funding

The NSW Government has provided \$100,000 per year for four years to be distributed through the Lake Macquarie Lead Mitigation Grant Program.

Grants are available for residents within the LAS grid within the limits of the annual funding amount¹ as per the following amounts:

XRF testing of soil

- Applicants must understand that X-ray fluorescence (XRF) analyser is a hand-held tool that is only suitable for roughly estimating soil contamination levels. Results from these studies are not accurate enough to guide Council staff in amending Section 10.7 Planning Certificates.
- XRF is a quick method for determining elemental composition of soil samples and can be a useful screening tool.
- Council officers will conduct the XRF testing at any residential property within the LAS area.

Lead in soil testing to confirm contamination status

- Applicants must understand that lead in soil laboratory testing (a consultant's contamination report) will provide an accurate measure of lead contamination at a property. These reports may result in an update to the property notation on the Section 10.7 Planning Certificate.
- If results are above 300ppm, the appropriate property notation (actually contaminated) will be added to the Section 10.7 Planning Certificate.
- If results are below 300 ppm, the appropriate property notation (below contamination land threshold) will be added to the Section 10.7 Planning Certificate.
- An allocation of up to \$20,000 per annum will be available to conduct this testing using a suitably qualified consultant² across eligible properties in the LAS area. Applicants will be eligible for up to \$1,000 for testing per property.

- Priority will be given to testing of properties that have not been previously remediated and for which development is planned.
- Properties that have been tested for lead in soil since 2010 will generally not be eligible, although applications will be assessed on a discretionary basis.

Assistance with Remedial Action Plans for residents undertaking development

- If a property has contaminated land notation 1 or 3, a Remedial Action Plan prepared by a suitably qualified consultant² is required when undertaking development.
- If a property has contaminated land notation 2, a detailed site investigation such as a lead in soil test may be required. If the results reveal that contamination is above the relevant threshold for the proposed land use, a Remedial Action Plan will be required.
- Grants funds may subsidise consultant fees by up to a limit of \$2,000 per property.
- Grant funds will generally not be available if the Standard Remedial Action Plan was available for use, although applications will be assessed on a discretionary basis.

Assistance with Validation Reports for residents undertaking development

- After completion of works outlined in a Remedial Action Plan, Council requires a validation report prepared by a suitably qualified consultant², to ensure works were completed according to the Remedial Action Plan.
- Grant funds may subsidise consultant fees by up to a limit of \$1,000 per property.

Assistance with costs of tipping fees associated with disposal of contaminated soil

- Contaminated soil from within the LAS grid must be disposed of at an appropriate licenced waste facility.

- Waste disposal of contaminated soil from the LAS grid must be undertaken in accordance with strict conditions. For more information go to the EPA's website <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/working-together/community-engagement/community-news/lmc-review-lead-exposure-management/lead-soil-disposal-for-lake-macquarie-residents>.
- Grant funds may subsidise disposal costs by up to a limit of \$5,000 per property.

Assistance with maintaining capped soil

- Maintenance of grassed areas is required to ensure contaminated soil does not become exposed.
- Grant funds may subsidise new top soil or other maintenance works on containment areas, by up to a limit of \$1,000 per property.

Assistance with raised garden beds

- It is recommended that any garden beds growing food for consumption are raised with clean soil to minimise exposure to lead.
- Grant funds may subsidise setting up raised garden beds by up to a limit of \$500 per property.

Temporary housing while a property undergoes remediation where an acute health risk is identified

- An acute health risk is identified when an applicant satisfies the health risk criteria identified in B(i) above.
- Relocation and return costs will be provided where the applicant is seeking temporary accommodation within a distance of 100km and plans to return to the property after remediation, up to a limit of \$2,500 per application.
- A proportion of 50% of the rent or a maximum of \$250 per week will be provided for temporary housing for a period of up to twelve weeks.
- Up to \$3,000 in total will be provided for temporary housing.

Remediation of land contaminated by lead where an acute health risk is identified

- An acute health risk is identified when an applicant satisfies the health risk criteria identified in B(i) above.
- Grant funds may subsidise costs for remediating land when completed according to a Remedial Action Plan, up to a limit of \$20,000 per application.

*Funding will **not** be provided for:*

- projects that include modifications to land where written approval from the property owner and relevant development approvals have not been provided; or
- businesses, schools and government departments.

Review

These Guidelines will be reviewed at least once each year by the Panel, and may be amended by resolution of the Panel or Council Portfolio Committee.

¹ Annual funding of up to \$100,000 is available each financial year. Amounts may vary from year to year. If unspent in any year, funds are rolled over into the next new financial year. Funding is available up to 30 June 2022 (subject to demand). If grant requests exceed available funds, eligible projects may be deferred to subsequent funding years

² A Suitably Qualified (contaminated land) Consultant is a consultant that is certified to schemes that are recognised by the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA). A list of EPA recognised contaminated land consultant schemes is available on the EPA website <https://www.epa.nsw.gov.au/your-environment/contaminated-land/managing-contaminated-land/engaging-consultant>.

For more information

- ☎ 02 4921 0333
 - 🌐 lakemac.com.au
 - @ council@lakemac.nsw.gov.au
 - ✉ Lake Macquarie City Council
Box 1906 HRMC NSW 2310
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