

fastlane

INNER WEST

Builders netted in river blitz

David Barwell

Sediment polluters receive maximum \$8000 fine



Free flu jab

● ALL children under five in NSW will be eligible for a free flu vaccine this year. The NSW government will fund the vaccine for all children aged six months to five years for the first time this winter. It follows a horror flu season when more than 103,892 people were struck down by influenza in NSW in 2017. Experts said the horror flu season was fuelled by young children spreading the virus. The current childhood vaccination rate for all disease is about 93.9 per cent in NSW.

WestConnex public meeting

● Inner West Council is hosting a public meeting to discuss the impacts the third stage of the state government's WestConnex road project could have on the local community at Ashfield Town Hall at 6.30pm on February 7. Details: inner-west.nsw.gov.au

MORE than 40 developers have been pulled up by inspectors during an environmental crackdown on building sites along the Parramatta River.

Results from the Get the Site Right compliance campaign showed many developers were still ignoring strict sediment and erosion controls which were designed to stop pollution entering local

waterways. Figures obtained by *The Courier* showed 48 of the 700 sites inspected along the Parramatta River received fines during the month-long blitz in November last year.

Of these, nine received the maximum \$8000 infringement, including three sites in the City of Sydney and two in the City of Canada Bay.

One developer, who had eight non-compliant sites across the local government areas, was handed two fines for insufficient sediment controls.

A Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) spokeswoman said inspections across the local government areas also recorded sites with poor maintenance,

build up of waste and unmanaged stockpiles of building material.

Despite the results, the PRCG has seen an 11 per cent improvement in compliance rates from the previous campaign in May last year.

NSW Environment Protection Authority's acting regional director Peter Bloem said the improvement

would go some way to addressing the impact sediment can have on Sydney waterways. "If not properly managed, sediment can not only affect the water quality and amenity of the waterway, but smothers aquatic vegetation, clog fish gills and even block waterways during times of storm and flood," Mr Bloem said. The campaign is part of ongoing efforts to make Parramatta River swimmable by 2025.

Picture: Richard Dobson



AMY'S RIDING THE FAST LANE

AUSTRALIA'S own Amy Shark has been busy building a cheerleading squad to rival Taylor Swift.

The fast rising singer-songwriter has amassed a celebrity following which includes former Blink 182 guitarist Tom Delonge, Lena Dunham and 2 Chainz.

"I'm putting my squad together," she said, laughing.

Shark is now a two-time ARIA winner after taking home awards for breakthrough artist and best pop release in November

"If you're a struggling musician who feels like they're getting nowhere, just keep going," Shark said in a heartfelt speech.

She was up for six awards, including album of the year for her EP *Night Thinker* and best female artist.

Shark is performing at Rozelle's Callan Park on Sunday as part of the line-up for St Jerome's Laneway Festival.

• See page 22-23 for our February festivals wrap-up



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After

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