



NORTHERN DISTRICT

River blitz nets polluters

Developers contaminating waterways pulled up by inspectors during crackdown

Steven Deare

BUILDING inspectors say they are winning the war on developers polluting the Parramatta River following their biggest blitz.

Inspectors assessed 905 commercial and residential building sites along both sides of the river, including Hunters Hill, Parramatta and Ryde properties, in November.

They recently issued 48 fines, totalling \$212,146.

Nine sites attracted the maximum penalty — an \$8000 fine. Two of the sites were in the Parramatta area and had faults such as building-site sediment entering the gutter and drain and a lack of sediment traps, such as sandbags.

The developer of one site, in Ryde, was fined \$6000.

The identity of the offend-

ing builders and sites has not been disclosed.

Despite the fines, Parramatta River Catchment Group — a coalition of councils and State Government bodies — has touted the results.

More than twice the number of sites were inspected than in the previous May 2017 blitz but the resulting fines were less than half those of the previous total

(\$433,140). Inspectors found 564 of the 905 sites (62 per cent) assessed in November complied with the rules (not all breaches resulted in fines).

This was better than the 224 of 439 sites (51 per cent) which complied in May.

Parramatta River Catchment Group chairman Mark Drury said he was pleased.

“This is the third time we

have run the Get The Site Right campaign and it is great to see that the message about the effects of sediment-laden run-off is finally getting through to developers,” he said.

He said the group would try to improve the results.

The inspections are part of efforts to make the river’s water quality safe for swimming again by 2025.