The Henderson Government has been sitting on $35 million it allocated in the 2008-09 budget that could have prevented the spillage of copper concentrate into Darwin Harbour, says Shadow Infrastructure Minister, Adam Giles.

Mr Giles said despite being announced in the budget two years ago, and flagged in a media release on budget day, it appears the $35 million still hasn’t been spent by the Government. The 2008-09 budget allocates $35 million to East Arm Wharf to:

‘Construct overland conveyor to improve bulk ship loading operation and environmental and traffic safety’

The exact same line item appeared again in last year’s budget, although the allocated amount was down slightly at $34.617 million.

“The timely construction of this important piece of wharf infrastructure could have prevented the images featured in Saturday’s Northern Territory News,” Mr Giles said.

“It’s typical of the Government’s approach to budgets that an announcement made two years ago still hasn’t been honoured by Labor.

“While it trumpets infrastructure spending, it is often vague at best on the time-frames for construction.

“The Chief Minister, Paul Henderson and Treasurer, Delia Lawrie should try and be more honest with Territorians.

“The Treasurer should also explain what has happened to the $35 million that still doesn’t appear to have seen the light of day.”

Further comment: Adam Giles 0421 588 118