BOTTLING ELECTRICITY AN EXPENSIVE WAY TO KEEP DARWIN GREEN

The Territory Opposition is sceptical of the Darwin City Council’s plans to build desalination plants at East Point, on The Esplanade and the Nightcliff foreshore to provide water to keep the municipal parks green.

Other, almost certainly better, options would be upgrading the waste water treatment plant at Ludmilla or trapping and storing the massive run-off that Darwin experiences during the Wet Season.

Desalination is usually the last option that governments consider because of the high economic and environmental costs associated with the process.

“Desalinated water is called bottled electricity for a reason,” says Fay Miller, Shadow Minister for the Environment, “the process is extremely energy intensive.”

‘It also produces a highly saline by-product that can pose serious environmental problems when pumped back into the sea.

“I applaud the Council’s initiative in looking at the water issue but integrating its needs with those of the Territory Government is likely to produce better outcomes.

“Upgrading the treatment plant would not only provide usable water for watering Darwin’s parks but also put an end to the pumping of untreated sewage into Darwin Harbour.

“Adelaide has successfully recycled much of its waste water for decades. The product is used to water extensive market gardens producing much of city’s fresh vegetables.

‘Using the voluminous run-off during the wet should also be considered.

“With climate change likely to produce even more rain in Darwin during the wet, capturing and using the run-off may make good sense long-term.

“I think the Council should get together with the Territory Government and discuss how the Darwin’s water needs might be met co-operatively.”

Further comment : Fay Miller 0407 720 511