



Economic Development

Productive ▶ Shoalhaven



From humble beginnings in 1977, Nowra Chemical Manufacturers has grown into an industry leader in the production of specialised chemical products.

Nowra Chemical Manufacturers, founded by well known Nowra couple John and Fay Lamont, today creates more than 400 household and commercial chemical products and has produced an award winning baby care line.

Forty years ago, the family-owned business employed two people. It now employs 70 Shoalhaven residents, including five industrial chemists, across its two manufacturing sites, warehouse and distribution centre and in administration.

Nowchem Sales and Marketing Manager Casey Addison says the company manufactures chemical products for home and industry, including detergents and disinfectants, pharmaceuticals such as sunscreen and sanitisers and water treatment chemicals.

Nowchem also acts as a contract manufacturer for other organisations to produce a large range of specialised chemical products.

While firmly Shoalhaven-based, Nowchem's market area extends to the Mid North Coast, south to Eden and west to Wagga Wagga.

The company recently established a new blending and filling area designed for organically certified cosmetics, specialising in small runs and batches for more specialised products.

Casey proudly states Nowchem's organic baby care range, Cherub Rubs, is extremely popular with parents who want only the best, natural products for their babies.

"It's a unique line and sells very well in overseas markets, including Hong Kong, Malaysia, Indonesia, China and Singapore," he says.

Formerly from Sydney, Casey made the seachange to the region 11 years ago following many holidays on the South Coast.

"The location and the people drew me to the area, the community feel is so good I'll never go back to Sydney."

Nowchem is very much part of the Shoalhaven community. It has close links with the Shoalhaven campus of the University of Wollongong, offering internships to students ready to graduate. Casey says the partnership benefits both the students to gain experience, and the business to keep up-to-date with emerging industry trends.

The company is proud of its community connections and each year allocates more than \$20,000 in sponsorships or employee time in the community, providing every full-time employee with two days paid leave to contribute back to the community.

The company established the Inspire Youth Australia Foundation in 2014, which supports local youth and encourage them to become changemakers in their community. This includes the coordination of the South Coast Youth Leadership Forum which involves local students, school communities, local council and volunteering services.

Casey believes the Shoalhaven is an ideal place to be in business and says there is no shortage of skilled workers. Many of Nowchem's staff have been trained on site and Casey says you don't have to go far when looking for expert boilermakers, welders, transport and other skilled staff.

"The Shoalhaven is very much supportive of itself and has great local people with strong skills sets," he says.

"It's an excellent place to do business and a lot of our customers love coming on-site because we're in such a great part of the world. They are proud to have their products made in the region.

"This region is full of skilled people who love living here. If you're thinking of starting up a business, there is just so much of the community who can help you.

"We have great access to services, and the development over the past few years in shopping centres and housing makes it a unique place to live. You can set up your family and secure yourself for the future."

