



FACT SHEET (1)

EROSION & SEDIMENT CONTROL ON RESIDENTAL BUILDING SITES

BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR THE CONTROL OF STORMWATER POLLUTION FROM BUILDING SITES

This erosion and sediment control fact sheet is part of living for the future in a clean green Emerald.

Impacts of stormwater pollution

Emerald's stormwater contains many pollutants which can enter our local creeks & river causing harm to native animals, plants, fish breeding habitats and recreational areas.

Soil erosion, sediment and litter from building sites can be major sources of stormwater pollution, and can cause:

- significant harm to the environment eg. loss of valuable seagrass habitat for marine creatures
- weed infestation of waterways caused by sediment settling on the creek beds and transporting nutrients
- loss of valuable topsoil
- significant public safety problems when washed onto roads and intersections
- blocked drains creating flooding and increased maintenance costs
- damage to our creeks & river for recreational fishing.

Stormwater is not wastewater

Stormwater is not wastewater. Stormwater flows untreated into the waterways that provide vital habitats for animals and plants. It is your responsibility to help keep stormwater pollution-free.

Erosion and sediment control on building sites

Soil erosion on building sites can be a major source of sediment pollution in our waterways. A single building block can lose up to four truckloads of soil in one storm. Sediment, washed from building sites into gutters and stormwater drains, can cause flooding and affects the water quality and fish stocks in our creeks & river.

Effective on-site erosion and sediment control provides many benefits:

- all-weather site access
- improved wet weather working conditions
- improved drainage and reduced site wetness
- less mud and dust problems
- reduced stockpile losses
- reduced clean-up costs
- better public image
- better looking, more marketable sites
- fewer public complaints
- reduced risk of fines
- better fishing for everyone.

Preventing sediment run-off from building sites is one of several ways that Council and industry are improving our waterways from Backyard to River.



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(2)

Queensland environmental law

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT 1994

All Queenslanders have a legal duty under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* to take all reasonable and practicable measures to minimise or prevent environmental harm. Such harm can be caused if sediment from building sites enters stormwater drains or waterways.

In addition, people who are concerned with management in a corporation have an additional duty under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* to ensure their corporation complies with the act. This means supervisors need to take reasonable and practicable steps to ensure that the people under their control do not breach environmental laws.

People who become aware of environmental harm in association with their work (eg. loss of sediment from their site into a watercourse) have a legal duty under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* to notify their employer. The employer must then rectify the problem.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION (WATER) POLICY 1997

This policy sits under the *Environmental Protection Act 1994*. The *Environmental Protection (Water) Policy 1997* provides for specific offences relating to the deposit and/or release of sediment or building wastes to stormwater drains, roadside gutters and Queensland waters eg. creeks and waterways.

THE INTEGRATED PLANNING ACT 1997

The *Integrated Planning Act 1997* is the mechanism for assessing all developments within Queensland. This act establishes the process for integrated planning and development assessment in an ecologically sustainable way. Under the *Integrated Planning Act 1997* it is a serious offence to breach development conditions eg. those dealing with erosion and sediment control or stormwater quality.

Other approvals

Councils in Queensland vary in their approval requirements. Contact Emerald Shire Council, Building or Plumbing Sections for further information.

**Note: Diagrams and selected photos courtesy of Catchments & Creeks Pty Ltd
Note: Selected written material courtesy Brisbane City Council
& Environmental Protection Agency.**

