

FACT SHEET

BUILDING SITES



THE FACTS

- Building and construction sites are responsible for a large part of our litter stream and stormwater pollution.
- Materials not appropriately stored on building sites can become litter that blows or washes away.
- Site deliveries that are not carefully managed, lead to packaging materials easily finding their way into the drainage system.
- Sand, soil and screenings are often stored in places where they can be washed into the stormwater system.
- Bad washing down practices can lead to concrete, paint, thinners and other chemicals being discharged to the stormwater system.¹
- Litter is one of the most visible forms of stormwater pollution, however, contaminants such as sand, waste water and oil all impact upon the environment.²

WHY SHOULD I CARE?

- Littered construction sites have little aesthetic appeal which can lead to a lack of appreciation of the surrounding areas and attract increased littering and less regard for site management.
- There is an increase in human health risks from hazardous litter washing in to our streets, as well as river banks and beaches through the stormwater system.
- Contaminants in the water smother habitats where aquatic animals feed and live, thus destroying their homes.
- Reduced light penetration in the water column, from sediments and excessive algal growth, leads to oxygen depleted water.¹
- Excessive waste in the stormwater system can cause blockages and lead to flooding.

LITTERING IS ILLEGAL

Under the *Litter Act 1979* a person or business can be fined for causing or allowing litter or pollutants, including soil, solvents, paint and fuels, to be discharged to the environment.

An on-the-spot fine of \$200 can lead to more infringements depending on clean-up costs.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TO HELP REDUCE BUILDING SITE LITTER

- Carry out all building and land development works in a way that is reasonable and practicable to prevent pollution entering the environment.
- Prepare a site management plan that includes evaluation of the site conditions and risks and outlines measures to manage wastes, control erosion and reduce the risk of stormwater pollution.
- Secure all litter and waste on site before disposing of it thoughtfully.
- Keep the verge, footpath and gutter free of building materials and wastes.
- Install an erosion/sediment barrier to catch sand and coarse sediment.
- Place sand, mulch and gravel stockpiles behind sediment barriers.
- Contain wash water and wastes from concrete, plaster, paint or brickwork in one area on site.
- Ensure rainfall runoff from downpipes does not leave the site.
- Use a shovel and broom to clean up sediments tracked onto roads by vehicles.
- Consider applying for the GREENSMART AWARDS through the Housing Industry Association.
- If you are someone who does the right thing, you can also help make a difference by registering to become a litter reporter.

For more information on
Keep Australia Beautiful
programs visit
www.kabc.wa.gov.au
or phone 6364 7210

REFERENCES

¹ Dr Robin Allison (stormwater specialist), Ecological Engineering; ² Keep Australia Beautiful CLEAN SITE program; Victoria Litter Action Alliance.