



REDUCING STORMWATER POLLUTION IN YOUR SHOPPING CENTRE/STRIP

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Clean stormwater helps keep our creeks, rivers and lakes, beaches and oceans healthy. Keeping our stormwater clean also provides us with new opportunities for stormwater harvesting and reuse. This helps us to protect our precious water reserves.

Shop owners and managers have a role to play in encouraging their customers to reduce the amount of litter and pollution in our stormwater drains.

A number of shops now promote the use of reusable shopping bags. This goes a long way to reducing plastic bag waste in our environment. Some shop owners have also installed cigarette butt bins outside their stores.

Why is stormwater pollution a problem?

The stormwater system is the gutters, street drains and pipes that collect rain run off and carry it to the nearest waterway.

This water is not treated to remove litter, debris and other pollution before it reaches our waterways.

The litter, food waste and grease that can wash down drains in retail areas can kill or damage aquatic plants and animals and ultimately wash up on our beaches. Excess waste can also block drains, causing flooding and expensive repair bills for councils and landowners.

The stormwater system is not the sewer. The sewerage system collects waste from sinks, bathrooms and toilets and carries it to a treatment plant. Businesses need a trade waste agreement with their local water authority to discharge waste into the sewage system.

Why should I reduce pollution from around my shop?

To keep your shop safe for staff and attractive for customers

Cutting the risk of pollution and spills helps keep your workplace safe. Litter and waste around your shop is unsightly, sometimes smelly, and can encourage customers to go elsewhere! A clean shop is more attractive to customers.

Stormwater pollution is a major environmental problem

Stormwater pollution is a major threat to Port Phillip Bay and to inland rivers across Victoria. It can affect the places we swim and the water we drink and wash in. Do not let your site be part of the problem.

What can I do to reduce pollution in my shopping centre/strip?

Work with your community

- Work with other retailers to educate your customers. Use stickers or posters in your local window reminding people about the effects of litter and dropping cigarette butts.
- Contact your local council about installation of cigarette butt bins, permanent bins for recyclable glass and plastic or education materials such as posters. Many councils have these already.

because this is our home



- Think about your packaging. Do you sell your products in packaging that could easily become litter? Is there a better alternative?

Prepare your workplace

- Train staff to prevent stormwater pollution.
- Restaurants – play it safe. Identify drains near your shop and make sure food waste and oil can not spill from your grease trap, rubbish bin or yard into a stormwater drain. Run them to the sewer or treatment area, according to your trade waste agreement.
- Make sure waste bins have secure lids so that litter does not blow around.

Keep your workplace clean

- A clean site is part of the job for all staff. Give floor and outside areas special attention.
- Separate waste for recycling wherever possible.
- Detergents, oils and any other materials that could wash off site must be stored to stop them getting into stormwater drains.
- Minimise the waste stored on your site. Check all receptacles regularly for leaks and safe storage.
- Don't hose down shop floors or concrete driveways, which allows wastes to run into the gutter.

Minimise the risk of an accident

- Make a plan to deal with spills. Involve staff in this planning. Do not hose spills down the drain – if the spill gets into the stormwater system you may be prosecuted for pollution.
- Get a spill kit and train staff to use it. A spill kit should include:
 - protective clothing
 - absorbing and cleaning agents – sand, sawdust, absorbent pads/pellets, 'kitty litter', mops, brooms and rags
 - portable bunds ('sausage' barriers similar to sandbags) to direct spills or wash-water away from drains to clean-up areas
 - shovels, brooms and dustpans to sweep up solid or powder spills.



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