
Managing pollution and contamination from flood water

Fact sheet | October 2022

Soil testing

Flood waters carry risks as they can wash contaminants into the river from urban and industrial areas upstream. Some contaminants may be hazardous to human health and the environment.

EPA is collecting soil samples from flood-affected areas to assist residents in their clean-up efforts following recent floods. The testing is to provide information about potential contamination because of the floods.

Soil samples will be collected and analysed for bacteria (E.coli), trace elements such as metals and metalloids, and organic chemicals such as Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and petroleum hydrocarbons.

EPA will provide a report outlining the results of soil testing to property owners, with broader results provided to councils to inform clean-up efforts.

Flood affected residents can obtain soil testing at their property by phoning EPA's Contact Centre on 1300 372 842 and selecting option 8.

What do I do if contaminants are found in my soil?

Personal protective equipment, including gloves and boots should always be worn when cleaning up flood debris, including soil. Always wash your hands with soap and running water after contact with soil, floodwater and after handling pets or other items that may have been in contact with water or soil.

EPA can provide expert advice to inform the clean-up of contaminated soil from flood affected properties. If flood affected residents require advice, they can visit epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/how-to/clean-up-after-a-flood or phone EPA's Contact Centre on 1300 372 842 and selecting option 8.

If flood affected residents require assistance with cleaning up their property, they should contact Emergency Recovery Victoria (ERV) on 1800 560 760.

Flood impacted rivers - Maribyrnong

EPA's new monitoring program of the Maribyrnong river will report testing results from three locations along the river, that were most impacted by the recent floods.

epa.vic.gov.au

Environment Protection Authority Victoria
GPO Box 4395, Melbourne VIC 3001
1300 372 842



The testing locations were selected as they are sites used by the public for recreational use on and around the water. Testing sites are located at:

- Solomons Ford, at the end of Canning Street
- Fairbairn Park, at Woods Street near the dog park and ovals
- Footscray City Rowing Club

We are testing for a range of contaminants including bacteria (E.coli and Enterococci), trace elements such as metals and metalloids, and organic chemicals such as Perfluoroalkyl and Polyfluoroalkyl Substances (PFAS) and petroleum hydrocarbons.

For more information, visit:
[.epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/flood-impacted-rivers](https://epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/flood-impacted-rivers)

Beach Report and Yarra Watch

In response to the recent floods, EPA has started its Beach Report and Yarra Watch programs early, on 20 October 2022. Beach Report and Yarra Watch forecast water quality based on rain, water quality history, sunlight, weekly sampling and pollution reports

EPA's Beach Report forecasts water quality for 36 beaches on Port Phillip Bay. Water samples are tested for a bacteria called enterococci.

Yarra Watch forecasts water quality at four sites along the Yarra River in partnership with Melbourne Water. Water samples are tested for a bacteria called E. coli.

Yarra Watch forecasting sites are located at:

- Launching Place
- Healesville
- Warrandyte
- Kew

Beach Report and Yarra Watch forecasts can be found on EPA's website. You can also register to receive EPA Beach Report's SMS alerts on beach water quality.

For more information visit: epa.vic.gov.au/for-community/summer-water-quality/beach-report.

Protect your health

In poor water quality, bacteria may lead to illness. A common illness from swimming in poor quality water is gastroenteritis. You should see your doctor if you suspect you are unwell from swimming.

To protect your health, EPA recommends not swimming near drains or river outlets for 48 hours after rain.

Further information and updates

If you require assistance with clean-up your flood-affected property, contact Emergency Recovery Victoria on 1800 560 760.

For current emergency advice, see Emergency Management Victoria's website [emergency.vic.gov.au](https://www.emergency.vic.gov.au).

For more information or to report pollution, contact EPA on 1300 372 842 or visit epa.vic.gov.au.



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