

Stormwater and protecting our waterways

Fact sheet



Help stop your business clouding our stormwater

Clean and clear stormwater is essential to the environmental health of our creeks, rivers, lakes, beaches and oceans.

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All of Victoria's businesses and households have a part to play in ensuring our stormwater is kept clean and clear, not clouded by pollution.

What is stormwater?

The stormwater system is designed to prevent urban flooding.

When rain falls on your business, it runs into your building's downpipe or the nearest stormwater drain, which then drains into your nearest creek, river, lake or bay.

Unlike the sewerage system, stormwater is not treated to remove the pollution or litter that it carries. Because of this, the pollution picked up by the stormwater can make our rivers and beaches unsafe to swim or fish in and seriously damage the natural environment

Most stormwater pollution is caused by everyday activities, not by major spills or industrial accidents. That is why it is important for us all to do our bit. What seems like a little bit of waste from your business is a very serious problem when multiplied by every business in your area.

Stormwater pollution includes many human-produced wastes such as litter, grease and oil, paint, detergents and many other products we use everyday at work.

Even seemingly 'natural' waste, such as soil and sand can cause major problems in our waterways.

Five steps for protecting stormwater

These are a few of the steps your business can take to ensure only clean rainwater goes into stormwater drains.

1. Check your drains

Is there any litter, cigarette butts, metal shavings, sand, sediment, raw materials or products getting into drains on or near your site that will pollute stormwater?

You can stop this material from getting into stormwater drains by:

- regularly picking up litter, sweeping outdoor areas and
- cleaning up drips and spills
- storing fine material securely so that it can not be blown away stopping forklifts and trucks tracking materials into outdoor areas.



Drains should be cleaned of litter

2. Secure loose material

You can control the escape of raw materials product and wastes from where they are used or stored by:

- storing and using fine material undercover or indoors
- storing all waste securely undercover or in bins and skips
- keeping all bins and skips closed
- sweeping up material that has escaped and placing it in a bin.



Store material securely

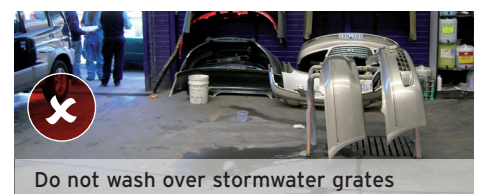
3. Washing plant, equipment or products

Make sure you do not discharge wash effluent to any stormwater drains.

Only undertake car detailing or equipment washing in a covered, bunded wash bay. The wash bay must be connected to the sewer system via a water/oil separator under a trade waste agreement with your local water authority. Use a commercial wash bay facility if you only do this work occasionally.



Pit traps stop material entering stormwater



Do not wash over stormwater grates

Most stormwater pollution is caused by everyday activities, not by major spills or industrial accidents. That is why it is important for us all to do our bit.

If a spill or discharge occurs to the stormwater, contact EPA 24 hours a day on 1300 372 842 (1300 EPA VIC)

4. Store and manage liquids appropriately

Use bunds for bulk liquid storage.

Bunds are protective borders placed around areas where liquids are used or stored, which contain the liquid should there be a spill.

If you only keep a few 205-litre drums use a spill pallet to catch any spills and drips.



Well positioned bunding to trap spills

5. Spill kits and spill response plans

If you are using liquids on your site it is essential to have a spill kit and a spill response plan.

Spill kits should be kept close to where liquids are used and stored.

A good spill kit contains absorbents, brooms, personal protective equipment, contaminated waste bags, drain seals and leak-sealing putty

Instructions on how to use the spill kit should be included in the spill response plan.



Spill pallets correctly placed will catch any spills

Maintain a spill response plan

A spill response plan describes what to do and who to contact in the event of a spill or leak. The plan should be kept with the spill kit to ensure they act as an emergency guide to support your staff training. These plans should be simple, clear and easy to read.

SPILL RESPONSE KIT INSTRUCTIONS

- STOP** When a spill occurs **STOP** a spill at source
- CONTAIN** Use booms to **CONTAIN** the spill
- ABSORB** Use absorbent pads to **ABSORB** the spill
- DISPOSE** **DISPOSE** of used absorbent in waste bag
- REPORT** **REPORT** the incident
- RESTOCK** **RESTOCK** the kit after use

Example spill response instructions