



REDUCING STORMWATER POLLUTION A GUIDE FOR PAINTERS

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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.

Painters must not release paint, thinners and other liquids into stormwater drains. This is particularly important for mobile businesses, because your work could be causing pollution at many different locations.

Why is stormwater pollution a problem?

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

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

Paint, thinners and paint stripper will cause major environmental problems if they get into the stormwater system. These highly toxic materials can kill aquatic animals and plants and ruin their habitats.

The stormwater system is not the sewer. Sewage is water from sinks, bathrooms and toilets and goes to a sewage treatment plant. Many businesses need a trade waste agreement with the local water authority to discharge waste to a sewer.

Why is stormwater management important to my mobile business?

For your safety and your clients'

Cutting the risk of pollution and spills helps keep your workplace and your clients' neighbourhood clean and safe.

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 business be part of the problem.

Can I dispose of my waste through my clients' home waste services?

You should contact your local water authority to find out whether you need a trade waste agreement to discharge liquid waste (such as detergents) to your client's sewer (via their toilet or laundry sink). In unsewered areas, you should take your wastewater with you.

Used paint, thinners and recycled solvent should be saved and reused. Empty tins and other containers can be collected for recycling. Contact EcoRecycle Victoria on 1800 353 233 for more details about chemical collection.

Solid waste such as non-toxic packaging and used newspaper can be disposed of in your client's rubbish bin.

Under no circumstances should litter or waste be disposed of down the stormwater drain.

because this is our home



What else can I do to reduce the risk of stormwater pollution

Preparing to work

- Educate staff about stormwater pollution.
- Use non-toxic or low-toxin/low-odour alternatives wherever possible.
- Identify stormwater entry points at each job and avoid conducting your work near them.
- Protect drain entry points with bunds to ensure pollution does not wash down the drains – use a spill kit to clean it up (see spill kit information below).
- Use waste bins with lids so that litter does not blow around.
- Keep equipment (such as spraying units) maintained, to cut the risk of leaks, and regularly cleaned so that any leaks can be seen quickly.
- Explain your practices to your clients and set a good example!

On the job

- Control airborne sprays so they cannot land on surfaces where rain will wash them down the drain.
- Chemicals, paints and any materials that could wash away must be stored safely onsite to stop them getting into stormwater drains.
- Use spill trays and drop sheets under work areas to collect oil and other fluids.

Cleaning up

- Separate your waste for reuse and recycling.
- Return unused paint to the tin for reuse.

- Clean brushes and rollers as follows:
 - ‘Paint’ the brush onto newspaper.
 - Rinse with a small amount of water (for water-based paints) or solvent (oil-based paints).
 - Let the water or solvent settle.
 - Water can be poured onto a garden bed (check with your client first!). Solvent can be reused or disposed of via a chemical collection program.
 - Paint residue should be disposed of as required by any trade waste agreement.
- Wash equipment in areas that drain to proper waste facilities. You may need to provide your own container if materials are unsuitable for the sewer.
- Make a plan to deal with spills. 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 know how 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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