

Minimising Stormwater Water Pollution

Tips for Residents

What is stormwater?

Stormwater is rainwater that runs off surfaces such as lawns, roads, roofs, carparks, footpaths and natural ground surfaces. Stormwater ultimately drains to our waterways without any treatment, transported by the drains, gutters and the underground pipe network.



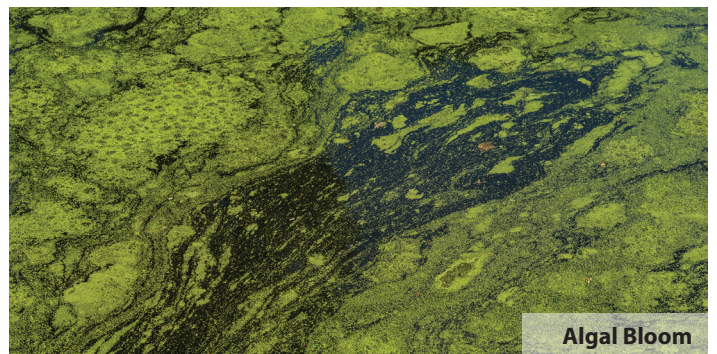
Every time it rains rainwater is discharged to our canals, creeks, rivers and the ocean through the stormwater network. Contaminants from our activities such as litter, oil, detergent, fertilisers, pesticides, grass cuttings, animal waste and soil are also washed with the rainwater. These contaminants impact on the health of our waterways.

Stormwater is different from sewage waste. Sewage waste comes from inside premises from sinks, washing machines and toilets and is piped to the Council's Sewage Treatment Plants.

Why is stormwater pollution an issue?

As stormwater travels over land, it picks up all kinds of chemicals and sediment that are not found naturally in our waterways and change the balance of naturally occurring elements. These chemicals and sediment have a negative impact on the water quality of our waterways and the animals that live in them.

Consequences of poor quality waterways may include an increase in toxic algal blooms, killing aquatic plants and animals, fish kills, promotion of unwanted weed growth and an increase in sedimentation of the waterways.



How can I help?

Every person is able to help reduce the amount of contaminants being discharged to our waterways.

Tips include:

- Stop littering – put all litter including cigarette butts, lolly wrappers and chewing gum in the bin.



- Wash cars on the lawn not in a driveway. Remember that your vehicles cannot be parked on the footpath.



- Use drip trays when maintaining your car in an area where any spills are able to flow into the gutter. Remove all waste oil to a collection point. Some Council waste facilities accept waste oil from domestic sources. To find out which facilities accept waste oil visit www.rrc.qld.gov.au.
- Be careful when using herbicides and pesticides – apply fertilisers in moderation according to the manufacturers direction and use environmentally friendly products.
- Reduce soil, sand and sediment being washed into the gutter.

- Manage animal faeces by placing in the bin and not allowing animals to foul the roadway, footpath or watercourse.
- Sweep your driveway, do not use a hose.
- Discharge air-conditioner condensate and pool backwash systems appropriately, not directly to the gutter.
- Ensure any loads of soil are not placed near the stormwater system and are spread as soon as practicable.
- Clean up grass clippings and compost if able.



- If painting, rinse all painting equipment on the grass not into the gutter.

Are there legal consequences?

YES the *Environmental Protection Act 1994* regulates that a prescribed water contaminant cannot be deposited into waters, a roadside gutter or stormwater drainage system.

All of the above activities produce chemicals or materials that are regarded as a prescribed water contaminant. Infringement notices can be issued to persons who deposit a prescribed water contaminant into the stormwater system.

What to do if I see something

If you see someone placing items in the stormwater system please contact Council's Customer Service Centre on 4932 9000 or 1300 22 55 77.

Contact us

Rockhampton Regional Council
Environment and Public Health Unit

P: 07 4932 9000 or 1300 22 55 77
E: enquiries@rrc.qld.gov.au
W: www.rrc.qld.gov.au

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