

Depositing prescribed water contaminants in waters

This fact sheet is designed to provide business operators and members of the community with an outline of the legislation relating to depositing prescribed water contaminants in waters and the enforcement process that can be expected.

Environmental Officers

Cassowary Coast Regional Council Environmental Officers (EOs) are responsible for providing a wide range of services with the aim of maintaining, protecting and improving the health of the environment and our community as a whole. Environmental Officers play an important role in providing education and advice to business and the community, as well as enforcing relevant components of state and local government legislation.

The Legislation

We can all help protect our waterways by not releasing prescribed water contaminants into stormwater, roadside gutters or bodies of water or another place where the contaminant can be reasonably expected to wash, blow, fall or otherwise move into water, a roadside gutter or stormwater drainage. If we do not, we may be committing an offence against Section 440ZG of the Environmental Protection Act 1994.

Prescribed water contaminants include pollutants such as:

- Chemical or waste containing a chemical
- Animal matter
- Ash, clay, gravel, sediment, stones or similar organic or inorganic material
- Building and construction material including concrete
- Oil
- Paint or water used for diluting or cleaning equipment
- Plant matter including lawn clippings, bark, leaves, mulch and sawdust
- Waste and waste water generated from indoor and outdoor cleaning
- Waste water from washing machines
- Waste and waste water generated from servicing and repairing vehicles
- Waste water including backwash from swimming pools, condensate from air compressors, water from air-conditioning or cooling systems and waste water from grease traps

For a complete list of prescribed water contaminants, refer to Schedule 9 of the Environmental Protection Regulation 2008.

Building and Construction

Land and infrastructure development (all residential, commercial, industrial and public infrastructure developments on land, such as subdivisions, roads, rail, bulk water distribution and hospitals) are subject to legal requirements for depositing prescribed water contaminants in waters, including water contamination caused by the release of sediments during the construction stage under complementary provisions of the Environmental Protection Act 1994.

New online tools to assist the building and construction sectors to meet their erosion and sediment control requirements have been prepared by Department of Environment and Heritage Protection, Master Builders Queensland, the Housing Industry Association (Qld.) and Healthy Waterways Ltd.

The factsheets and compliance guidelines provide technical advice and mobile user-friendly checklists to prevent sediment leaving building and construction sites and reaching our local waterways - the iconic Great Barrier Reef. See the Healthy Waterways online Erosion and Sediment Control (ESC) Toolkit <http://healthywaterways.org/esc> on the Healthy Waterways website.

Generally Council has an obligation to investigate non compliances with relevant legislation both within businesses and the community whether received via a complaint or other means.

Further Information

For further information contact Council at 1300 763 903 or email enquiries@cassowarycoast.qld.gov.au.