

## WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION

### Preventing Water Pollution is Important

Clean water is essential for human health, ecosystems, the environment, and the overall wellbeing of our community. Preventing water pollution is essential to safeguarding water resources, ensuring a sustainable future, and protecting the environment and endangered populations (such as koalas and platypus) that we have in our Shire.

Liquids that fall on our streets and roads, end up in the gutter and stormwater drains as stormwater. This then runs via a network of pipes (often underground) and flows into our local waterways, such as rivers and creeks. Sometimes bulky materials are captured in Gross Pollutant Traps, however, the liquids are unfiltered and untreated.

### How Can We Prevent Water Pollution?

Protecting our water resources and environment requires a collective effort. By implementing best practices and fostering a sense of responsibility within the community, we can help to preserve clean and healthy waterways and aquatic environments for future generations, by taking into consideration the recommendations below.

### Be Mindful of Runoff Water

Runoff from utilising high-pressure hoses on hard surfaces such as roofs and driveways, from construction sites, parking lots, vehicle wash areas can carry pollutants such as oil, sediment, litter and chemicals into Council's stormwater system and our waterways. Runoff water from any type of washing activity must not enter stormwater drains. This includes washing of cars, equipment, roofs. Adequate sediment and erosion control measures on construction sites are very important.

### Can I Gurney My Roof and Allow the Water to Enter the Drain?

No. You must not allow any water from the use of high-pressure hoses/gurneys to enter the drain. Ensure that any contractors you engage have the relevant understanding and training to take adequate measures to prevent any water from entering the stormwater system. There are significant penalties for pollution of waters, such as on the spot fines of \$4,000 for an Individual and \$8,000 for a Corporation.

# FACT SHEET

## **Use Household Chemicals Wisely**

Household chemicals can be sources of water pollution. Ensure that cleaning chemicals, pesticides, fertilisers are disposed of appropriately and do not contaminate water sources. Use any household chemicals responsibly and store them appropriately, follow manufacturer instructions of household chemicals, using them sparingly and avoiding over-application.

## **Dispose of Waste Properly**

Illegal dumping of waste, including rubbish and cigarette butts, onto our roads ends up in waterways and directly pollutes the environment. All waste must be disposed of legally and to a facility that is licensed to receive such waste.

## **Where should Backwash Water from my Swimming Pool go?**

Backwash water from swimming pools should ideally be discharged into the sewerage system. Wastewater from backwashing must not be allowed to enter the drain and stormwater system.

## **Keep Onsite Sewage Management Systems Well Maintained**

Poorly managed onsite sewage management systems, inadequate maintenance or malfunctioning septic systems can lead to the release of harmful pathogens and nutrients into groundwater or surface water. Ensure that any Onsite Sewage Management Systems are well maintained. For more information refer to Council's brochure 'Caring for your septic tank system (householder information brochure)'.

## **Talk to Your Neighbours About Water Pollution**

Talk to people and your neighbours about the importance of protecting our waterways. If you see your neighbour polluting, have a chat to them and refer them to this Fact Sheet.

## **For Any Concerns About Water Pollution**

If you see water pollution occurring in our Shire these can be reported for investigation. For large factories and manufacturing processes licenced with the NSW EPA, please report the matter to the EPA's Environment Line on 131 555. For any other enquiries, please contact Council on (02) 4677 1100.

## **How Water Pollution is Controlled**

Pollution of water is controlled under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997*. Under section 120 of this Act it is an offence to cause or permit the pollution of any waters.