

# Eco-Friendly Advice for D.I.Y. Projects

## DON'T POLLUTE STORMWATER

If you like your street and home to be tidy, healthy and safe, spare a thought for our native plants, fish and animals... because they do too!

Many of the materials that we use in building and home improvements may look harmless but they have the potential to harm or spoil your local environment if they are not used and disposed of correctly. Anything that is washed or blown out onto your street, such as sand, paint wash water, cement slurry, mulch and soil will find its way into the stormwater drain. Stormwater isn't treated, so pollutants such as these will end up in your local creek, river, lake or beach with potentially disastrous results.

So don't let your good work go down the drain. This fact sheet shows you how easy it is to do the right thing and make sure your building, renovating or landscaping project is an eco-friendly one that doesn't destroy the homes of others in the environment! And make sure any tradespeople or contractors you employ also do it right.



## Managing dirt, soil, sand and landscaping supplies

### Vehicles delivering materials

- Materials being delivered to your site should be covered during transit to prevent anything blowing off.
- Vehicles should enter and leave your site by one stabilised, compacted access point (such as your driveway). This prevents mud and soil being tracked onto the road and stops your whole site becoming churned up.

### Stockpiles

- Soil, sand and landscaping supplies such as mulch, bark chips or gravel should be placed well away from street gutters and covered securely at the end of each day. If the pile is too large to cover, or it will be left out for more than a day, surround it with a silt fence, hay bales or sand filled bags.

### Tidying up

- Scrape and sweep up any soil, sand, mud or other material left or spilled onto the road, verge or footpath as soon as possible. Don't sweep or hose them into your street gutter or stormwater drain.



A simple silt fence can be made from shade cloth, plastic or cloth attached to timber stakes or star doublers.



## Painting and plastering

### Painting

- Use environmentally friendly paint products where possible.
- Paint waste and wash waters from both water-based and oil-based paints should be diverted into and collected in a containment area.
- Oil-based clean-up material such as mineral turpentine should be filtered through paper towelling for reuse, or left to evaporate if you are using small quantities, or taken to a licensed waste depot.
- Unused paint should be allowed to dry in the tin and then disposed of as solid waste in your rubbish bin, or it can be kept in a sealed container and disposed of at a licensed waste depot.



Make a clean-up containment area by digging a shallow depression in your garden, or placing soil in a circle on your lawn. You can easily restore it when you have finished.

Line your paint wash containment area with newspaper. It will soak up the liquid and when this is dry, dispose of the newspaper in your rubbish bin.

### Plastering

- All plaster residues, wastes and wash waters should be allowed to dry within your on-site containment area, then disposed of according to your Council's hard waste requirements.



Government of South Australia



**Catchment Water Management Boards**  
Caring for our creeks and rivers

Brought to you by the Patawalonga and Torrens Catchment Water Management Boards, Northern Adelaide and Barossa Catchment Water Management Board and Onkaparinga Catchment Water Management Board.



## Paving, bricklaying and concreting

### Concrete and mortar mixing

- Mix cement mortar or concrete in an area which prevents all excess water, residues and waste from entering the stormwater system. An old wheelbarrow or a containment area is ideal.
- Mortar must not be mixed in street gutters or any other location where waste or slurry can drain into the stormwater system.

### Brick cutting and paving

- Wastewater and slurry generated from brick and paver cutting must be prevented from entering the stormwater system.
- To prevent the wastewater escaping, build an earth mound around your cutting area or hire a “Brickasaurus” machine for the day.

### Tidying up

- Never hose any leftover material into the street gutter.
- When finished, dispose of any wastes in accordance with your Council’s hard waste requirements.

### TIPS

Let concrete and brick cutting slurry dry out, then scrape or sweep it up for disposal.

## Waste Disposal

### Reduce, Reuse, Recycle

When you have completed your DIY project and are faced with a pile of waste, sort out the building materials that are suitable for recycling – you may be surprised at how much can be reused. For more information visit [www.recycling.sa.gov.au](http://www.recycling.sa.gov.au) or contact Zero Waste SA on **8204 2051**.

### Council Waste

Always check with your local Council regarding their waste disposal requirements and recycling services, including locations of licensed waste depots. Refer to the Government Section of the White Pages for telephone numbers, or visit [www.lga.sa.gov.au](http://www.lga.sa.gov.au).

### Hazardous Waste

The Hazardous Household Waste Depot is a free service operated by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) for householders and farmers (not businesses) to dispose of hazardous wastes. The depot accepts waste pesticides, pharmaceuticals, solvents, thinners, paints, oils, fuels, batteries and unknown chemicals.

The depot is located at the corner of Magazine Road and Henschke Street, Dry Creek, and is open between 9am and noon on the first Tuesday of every month (excluding public holidays). For further information visit [www.environment.sa.gov.au/epa](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/epa) or contact the EPA on **8204 2004**.

### TIPS

Gypsum based plasterboard (eg Gyprock) can be crushed and used for modifying clay soils.

## Information and Resources

- Caring for your catchment - contact your local Catchment Water Management Board or visit [www.catchments.net](http://www.catchments.net)
- Training and resources for building site pollution management (Clean Site program) – visit [www.kesab.asn.au/cleansite/index.htm](http://www.kesab.asn.au/cleansite/index.htm) or telephone KESAB on **8234 7255**
- More detailed information about building site management and stormwater pollution prevention - download “Pollution Avoidance on Building Sites” booklet from [www.environment.sa.gov.au/epa/pdfs/building\\_sites.pdf](http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/epa/pdfs/building_sites.pdf) or contact the EPA on **8204 2004**
- General information about South Australia’s water issues – visit [www.watercare.net](http://www.watercare.net) or telephone **1800 420 820**

### TIPS

Collect up leaves, grass clippings and other garden wastes, because they also pollute stormwater. Compost them or dispose of them in your green waste bin.

### IMPORTANT NOTE:

The information contained within this document relates to activities undertaken by a DIY home handyperson. Tradespeople must check with the relevant authorities regarding trade waste disposal and compliance with their legal obligations to prevent stormwater pollution on building sites.