EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL



Erosion and sediment control keeps soil, sand, and other building materials from washing off construction sites into gutters, drains, and waterways. This runoff can damage water quality, harm aquatic life, and make recreational areas unsafe. It can also clog drains, leading to overflows and flooding.

Effective control means carefully managing the site before, during, and after construction. Using various measures helps reduce site disturbance, capture sediment, and prevent stockpile loss – improving overall site conditions.

WHY YOU NEED AN EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL PLAN

- Legally, you must install erosion and sediment control measures on your site, and many councils require a control plan before work starts.
- Organising your site helps save money and prevent loss of supplies during wet weather – reducing downtime.
- Proper control measures enhance worker safety, protect the community, and contribute to cleaner, safer waterways.

INCREASED PENALTY NOTICES (ON-THE-SPOT FINES)

Penalty notices should reflect the actual harm or potential harm of an offence, rather than just being seen as the cost of doing business. That's why on-the-spot fines have gone up for many offences under the POEO Act, and some offences have higher fines for repeat violations.

For common offences like water pollution or not following a clean-up notice, the fines are:

- **$15,000 for a first offence and $22,500 for a second offence for individuals**
- **$30,000 for a first offence and $45,000 for a second offence for corporations.**

GET THE SITE RIGHT

'Get the Site Right' is a joint taskforce of local councils, catchment groups, and NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), which targets erosion and sediment control on commercial and residential building sites across NSW.

We work with developers, builders, and the community to raise awareness about the harmful effects of sediment runoff on our creeks, rivers, harbours and beaches, and highlight the important role they play in helping to improve water quality and protect our natural environment and wildlife.

For more information on erosion and sediment control, contact your local council or visit: **georgesriver.org.au/get-the-site-right**

GET THE SITE RIGHT IS PROUDLY SUPPORTED BY

CooksRiver Alliance

Georges Riverkeeper

NSW EPA

Parramatta River Catchment Group

Sydney Coastal Councils Group

WaterNSW

SEE A SITE THAT'S NOT RIGHT?

Report pollution incidents, including poor erosion and sediment control, to your local council or the EPA's 24/7 Environment Line on 131 555.

Updated: March 2025

IS YOUR SITE RIGHT?

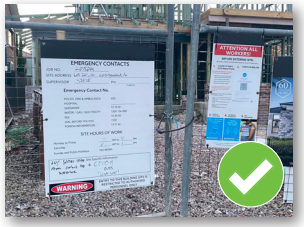
Erosion and sediment control for builders and developers



GET THE SITE RIGHT

BEST PRACTICE EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL

For more information on erosion and sediment control, contact your local council or refer to the Department of Planning, Housing and Infrastructure's *Guidelines for erosion and sediment control on building sites.*





SITE SIGNAGE

Erect a prominent sign on-site showing the name and contact details (including an after hours phone number) of the principal contractor and certifier.




STABILISED SITE ACCESS

Establish a single, stabilised entry/exit point using 30-40mm sized aggregate or recycled concrete, to reduce sediment tracking off the site. Sweep the footpath and road daily to remove any loose sediment.




SITE VEGETATION

Minimise the area to be cleared and leave as much vegetation on the site as possible. Retain the grass or lay turf strips on the verge to stabilise the area between the kerb and footpath. Replant the site as soon as possible after construction is completed.




STORMWATER DIVERSION & DOWNPIPES

Divert stormwater to flow around the building site and any disturbed areas. Connect temporary or permanent downpipes from the guttering to the stormwater drain as soon as the roof is installed.




SILT FENCING

Install silt fencing correctly, using geotextile material, along the low side of the site before work begins. Place silt fencing behind the construction site fence to prevent hazards and vandalism. Check and repair fencing regularly and remove any accumulated sediment.




WASTE CONTAINMENT

Store all hard waste correctly to prevent it from being blown or washed off the site. Discard smaller items such as litter in a bin with a tight-fitting lid or skip that is covered securely.




SEDIMENT CONTROL DEVICES

Some councils permit the use of silt socks, fibre logs or straw bales to filter and/or divert sediment runoff away from stormwater drains. Install correctly to prevent obstructions and flooding, check regularly for damage, and remove once construction has finished.




STOCKPILE STORAGE & SILT CONTROL

Store all stockpiles and building materials behind sediment controls, and at least 2 metres (preferably 5 metres) from hazard areas such as driveways, paved areas and waterways. Cover stockpiles in the event of rain and wind, and sweep up any loose sediment daily.




EQUIPMENT CLEANING

Clean all building equipment in a designated area away from stormwater drains. Dispose of excess building materials safely and never sweep, pour or hose them into the gutter or stormwater drain.

Image courtesy of Lake Macquarie City Council.