

New penalties. How are they relevant to you?

From 1 July 2018, Lockyer Valley Regional Council authorised officers have the ability to issue Penalty Infringement Notices (PINs) to both individuals and corporations if they do not comply with legal requirements relating to sediment pollution and water contamination.

Developers, builders, contractors, farmers and even home owners have a responsibility to prevent soil and other contaminants from entering our drains, waterways and depositing on our roads. If you are undertaking vegetation clearing, construction activities, renovations or have exposed soil on your property, you have an obligation to install and maintain erosion and sediment control measures until grass or other cover is well established.

Why should you manage your soil?

When soil and other contaminants wash into our drains and waterways, it causes water pollution which is unsightly and unhealthy, increases costs of drinking water treatment, smothers plants which are food sources for aquatic animals, and has significant economic impacts on tourism, recreation and fishing.

It's also the law. You have a legal obligation under The Queensland Environmental Protection Act 1994 which states:

"A person must not carry out any activity that causes, or is likely to cause, environmental harm unless the person takes all reasonable and practicable measures to prevent or minimise the harm."

This is known as the **general environmental duty**.

The maximum penalty units and associated fines for pollution offences are significant:

- Individual maximum 15 penalty units (currently \$1,958.25)
- Corporation maximum 75 penalty units (currently \$9,791.25)

(as at July 1, 2018)



Erosion and Sediment Control



What can you do?

There are simple things you can do to prevent soil being washed away. Control measures will vary from site to site depending on the activities you are doing, the slope of your property, the type of soil you have and the size of the disturbed area. Some examples of preventative include:

- **Minimise disturbance of the ground.** The less soil you expose, the less you need to control. Maintaining as much grass as possible will also make your property look better and you won't have to spend as much on turf when you're finished your site works.
- **Construct diversion drains.** Using temporary drains to divert water away from exposed soil and construction sites will minimise the risk of erosion and help your soil stay on site.
- **Install rumble pads.** Installing pads which use vibration to shake dirt from vehicles as they enter and leave your property will minimise the amount of sediment tracking onto roads, as it ultimately ends up in stormwater drains.
- **Cover your stockpiles.** All stockpiles of soil, sand and other materials should be placed within your construction site and covered to stop them from washing and blowing away. This will also save you the expense of replacing materials that wash down the drain.
- **Install sediment fencing.** Properly installed sediment fencing will slow down stormwater runoff, enabling particles of soil to deposit behind the fence before the water enters stormwater drains.
- **Turf your property as soon as possible.** During construction, lay turf around the kerb to catch any sediment which may escape from your property. Once your construction is complete, lay the remainder of your turf and ensure it is established before removing your other control measures.

More information

Healthy Land and Water Erosion and Sediment Control & Information:

<http://hlw.org.au/initiatives/erosion-and-sediment-control-sad-14733>

Catchments and Creeks Field Guides:

www.catchmentsandcreeks.com.au/erosion_and_sediment_control_field_guides.html

International Erosion Control Association Australasia:

www.austieca.com.au/