

FACT SHEET 8E

EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL FOR NEW HOME OWNERS

New home owners may receive their keys before landscaping, turfing, installation of driveways, retaining walls and plantings are completed. Before these works have been completed, bare soil is exposed to rain and wind, often resulting in soil erosion and water pollution.

Some builders leave erosion and sediment controls in place, including green sediment fencing, gravel access and/or aggregate bags in the gutter when they finish construction. The responsibility for preventing pollution transfers to the new home owner once they receive their keys. This happens irrespective of what erosion and sediment controls are left in place or their condition.



Why is it important?

Sediment (including sand, soil and gravel) can wash from your land into local drains, creeks and eventually into Lake Macquarie. This is water pollution. Sediment damages aquatic and marine eco-systems and reduces water quality for recreational activities including surfing, fishing and boating. It also costs Council a significant amount of money to remove.

What are commonly used erosion and sediment control measures?

A number of control measures may be used on your land including:

- sediment fence;
- turf strips;
- gravel;
- mulch; and
- coir logs.

What do I need to do?

When you are given the keys to your new house you should:

- not remove existing controls left by builder unless they are unsafe or causing pollution;
- check to see if they are installed correctly and replace if needed;
- obtain advice on best measures for your land by contacting Council;
- install measures adequate for your land if there are no control measures;
- cover bare soil with a ground cover including mulch, gravel, vegetation, geofabric or anything else that will protect the soil from rain and prevent erosion. This should be done even as a temporary measure;
- aim to finish all landscaping works as a priority;
- inspect regularly and maintain all control measures; and
- remove any sediment or other pollutant washed off your land onto the verge, footpath, gutter or roadway, as soon as you see it.



WHERE CAN YOU BUY MATERIALS FOR EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL?

Material	Supplier
Turf strips	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware store • Landscaping/garden supplier • Contact turf suppliers through the Yellow Pages
Sediment Fencing and Stakes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware store • Landscaping/garden suppliers • Professional installers through the Yellow Pages • Online
Gravel	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware store • Landscapers/garden suppliers • Recycled concrete suppliers
Mulch or similar	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware store • Landscapers/garden suppliers • Recycled garden suppliers
Coir logs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hardware store • Landscapers/garden suppliers • Online

Public safety

Do not put anything on the road verge, footpath, gutter or roadway that could pose a hazard to others.

Environmental legislation and Council Development Consents

Under the *Protection of the Environment Operations Act 1997* (POEO), allowing sediment or sediment laden water to enter any waterway including street gutters, stormwater drains, swales or creek lines (flowing or not) is considered to be water pollution. Penalties and notices can apply including fines of up to \$5 million.

Council will enforce the POEO where necessary, however we endeavour to provide information about erosion and sediment control and encourage you to help us protect the Lake by reducing water pollution.

Non-compliance with the conditions of a Development Consent is a breach of the *Environmental Planning and Assessment Act 1979* and may also attract fines.

Further information

- **Council's website;**
- the 'Blue Book' - *Managing Urban Stormwater: Soils and Construction*, Landcom (2004) 4th Ed;
- International Erosion Control Association (Australasia)(IECA) (free downloads) www.austieca.com.au; or
- Call Council's Erosion and Sediment Control Officer on **02 4921 0333**.

Acknowledgements and disclaimer:

This fact sheet contains information from NSW EPA website.

This fact sheet is for general information only and is not intended to cover every situation. It is not a regulatory document. Obtain your own independent professional advice.

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