

# STORMWATER – A PRECIOUS RESOURCE

## FACT SHEET



Photo: Nepean River

### WHAT IS STORMWATER?

When rain falls on vegetated areas such as bushland, playing fields, parks and reserves it is filtered by soil and plants, and is absorbed into the ground. When rain falls on hard surfaces such as rooftops and roads, it cannot soak into the ground and becomes stormwater runoff. Stormwater runoff often collects pollution such as dirt, chemicals, and litter, carrying them into stormwater drains and into waterways.



Photo: Mountain View Resrve wetland

### WATERWAYS WITHIN THE PENRITH LGA

The Penrith area has a number of waterways that are used for a range of recreational activities. These include but are not limited to:

- Peach Tree Creek
- Wianamatta South Creek

- Nepean River
- Surveyors Creek
- Werrington Lakes and Werrington Creek
- Mulgoa Creek
- Penrith Lakes

Did you know that roadside kerbs and stormwater drains are waterways and lead directly into our rivers and creeks without being treated?



Photo: Stormwater entering the roadside kerb

### WHY IS STORMWATER IMPORTANT?

Stormwater runoff enters creeks and rivers that provide habitat for flora and fauna. It is also used for recreational activities (boating, fishing, and swimming) and improves the amenity of the area.

Chemicals like cleaning supplies, paints and other toxins can make water unsafe for humans and animals. Litter reduces the amenity of the area, destroys habitat for wildlife and can injure wildlife. Excessive amounts of nutrients from fertilisers, animal waste and organic material can cause algal blooms.

Minimising the impact of stormwater pollution helps to keep waterways healthy, supports our wildlife and

benefits all members of the community.



Photo: Water flowing through Erskine creek.

### STORMWATER FACTS, HINTS AND TIPS

- Stormwater is not treated by sewage treatment plants.
- Washing your car on the lawn reduces the amount of chemicals that end up in our rivers and creeks.
- Dumping garden waste and lawn clippings in nature reserves or down stormwater drains is illegal and pollutes our rivers and creeks.
- Rubbish can easily blow away so cover it up to prevent it entering local waterways.
- Do not tip unwanted fish, weeds and water from your fish tank into local waterways.
- Oil and grease pollute waterways. Ensure vehicles are serviced regularly.
- Dispose of animal waste in the green-lidded FOGO bin using Council-provided green FOGO bags
- Treat your kerb and gutter as if it was a creek.

- Installing a rainwater tank helps with water reuse.
- Remember “the drain is just for rain”.



Photo: Jordan Springs lake

### WHAT COUNCIL IS DOING

Council implements Water Sensitive Urban Design requirements for private and public developments.

Furthermore, Council manages over 150 gross pollutant traps, bioretention basins and rain gardens to help protect waterways and provide treatment to improve the quality of stormwater runoff before it enters our rivers and creeks.



Image: Litter being capture by a Gross Pollutant Trap (GPT).

**For more information on this topic contact the Waterways team on 4732 7777 or visit [penrith.city](http://penrith.city)**