



MEDIA RELEASE

6 March 2025

Higher building costs and forecasted rain reinforce the need for builders to properly manage sites

Increased construction costs, along with predicted above-average rainfall, emphasise the urgency for builders and developers to 'Get the Site Right' to prevent sediment laden runoff and other building waste from leaving their sites and polluting our waterways.

Data from the Australian Bureau of Statistics in November 2024 revealed that building supply costs have risen by up to 15%¹, while the Bureau of Meteorology's long-range forecast predicts higher-than-average rainfall for much of eastern Australia in February and March 2025².

Now in its ninth year, Get the Site Right is a joint taskforce between the Parramatta River Catchment Group, Cooks River Alliance, Georges Riverkeeper, NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Sydney Coastal Councils Group, WaterNSW, and councils across NSW.

The campaign aims to prevent pollution of local waterways by highlighting the importance of securing building materials and ensuring sites are properly managed. The 2025 campaign includes expanded educational materials and collaboration with councils to help standardise inspection reporting and increase awareness of best-practice erosion and sediment control.

As part of the month-long campaign in March, officers from NSW EPA and more than 20 councils will participate in inspections for a one-day compliance blitz on **Thursday 13 March**.

In the October 2024 Blitz, 748 sites were inspected, with 56.4 percent found to be compliant by the end of the campaign – a slight decrease compared to the May campaign, highlighting the ongoing need for greater education and enforcement.

\$357,410 in fines were issued for non-compliance, including inadequate sediment controls and unsecured building waste.

NSW EPA Executive Director Operations, Jason Gordon, said builders and developers have a duty to ensure their sites have the proper controls in place to prevent pollution incidents.

"Large building sites can lose up to four truckloads of soil in a single storm if not properly managed. This not only wastes materials, but puts our environment at risk," Mr Gordon said.

"Sediment runoff can have serious environmental impacts including harming aquatic life, eroding creeks and riverbanks, and damaging stormwater infrastructure.



“Thanks to stronger penalties, with on-the-spot fines for water pollution starting at \$30,000 for companies, builders and developers have even more reason to prevent pollution and do the right thing.”

Parramatta River Catchment Group Coordinator (PRCG), Alexi Gilchrist, said that preventing sediment runoff from polluting our waterways is essential for creating more places to swim and cool off as temperatures rise.

“Many builders enjoy fishing, boating, and other water activities in our rivers, harbours, and beaches,” Mr Gilchrist said.

“Installing and maintaining proper controls on building sites saves builders time and money and helps improve water quality. This is especially important as we celebrate the opening of the Parramatta River’s newest swim site, Putney Beach, with three more planned for the next two years.”

The Sydney Coastal Councils Group Chair, Councillor Shannon Welch, emphasised the importance of strong site management in light of rising construction costs and forecasted heavy rainfall.

“It’s more important than ever for developers and builders to secure construction materials and implement proper erosion and sediment controls. The Get the Site Right campaign plays a critical role in ensuring best-practice site management, protecting our waterways from sediment runoff, and safeguarding the health of our coastal and marine environments for future generations,” said Cr Welch.

A follow-up blitz week will be held from 25 to 29 August 2025.

Members of the public are encouraged to report pollution incidents, including poor sediment control, to their local council or via the NSW EPA’s 24-hour Environment Line on 131 555.

¹[Australia inflation: Home building costs rise \\$100,000 over four years](#)

²[Australian climate outlook](#)

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Note to Editors:

Images available on request.

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