

LANDSCAPE GARDENING AND GARDEN MAINTENANCE

Landscape gardeners carry out many activities that can potentially pollute the environment. By complying with the *Environment Protection Act 1997* (the Act) and the associated Environment Protection Regulation landscapers can play their part in protecting the environment. The Act aims to:

- > protect our aquatic environment, considering that stormwater and road drains empty directly and without treatment into our creeks, lakes and rivers
- > minimise environmental harm from local emissions of dust, smoke and other airborne pollutants
- > protect people from undue noise while enabling them to carry out their business and social activities
- > ensure all practical measures are employed to prevent contamination of the land from hazardous substances.

GARDEN AND LAWN MAINTENANCE

- > Do not allow lawn clippings to enter the stormwater drains. Mowing must be performed so the outside cut directs the clippings inward to grass and not onto the footpath, gutters or road.
- > Do not allow other green waste, sediment, fuel, fertiliser, pesticides or other pollutants into the street, gutter or stormwater drains.
- > A licence is required to use bore water.
- > Motorised lawn mowers and other equipment contribute to noise and air pollution. Maintain your equipment and operate in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications.
- > Ensure garden maintenance activities that generate noise are conducted within the time periods detailed in the Regulation as outlined below.

Location	Monday to Saturday	Sunday and Public Holidays
Residential areas	7am to 8pm	8am to 8pm
Non-residential areas	7am to 10pm	8am to 10pm



LANDSCAPING

- > Install erosion and sediment controls to prevent soil from leaving the property.
- > Schedule grading and excavation projects for dry weather.
- > Sweep the road and gutters at the end of the day or before it rains to prevent pollution being washed into the stormwater drain. Place sweepings in the garbage or compost.
- > Provide temporary booms or bunds across downslope gutters to contain any accidental material spills from the site. Remove sediment from the road before the bunds are removed by dry sweeping only.
- > Protect stockpiles and materials from wind and rain by storing them under tarps or secure plastic sheeting.
- > A silt fence (temporary sediment control) constructed around the base of a stockpile may be necessary in some situations such as when stockpiles are on a slope and/or near hard surfaces.
- > If you wish to stockpile materials on the nature strip you must lodge an 'Application to use a public place for construction activities' form with Territory and Municipal Services Directorate. Forms are available at www.tams.act.gov.au or by calling Access Canberra on 13 22 81. In some instances approval may be granted for short term use of the nature strip area.
- > A 'Nature strip development application' form must be lodged with Territory and Municipal Services Directorate for any landscaping activities, other than planting grass, on the nature strip. Forms are available at www.tams.act.gov.au or by calling Access Canberra on 132281.
- > In circumstances where a development approval is required you must comply with the Landscape
- > Management Protection Plan (LMPP) for your site. For more information call Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

BUILDING

- > Ensure all wastewater and dust from cutting bricks
- > and pavers is prevented from entering the stormwater system. Do not cut bricks on the road or footpath.
- > When using water based paints, use one container of water to clean your equipment and another container to rinse. Dispose of wastewater by tipping it onto a flat, grassy area or an area that will retain liquid. Dried solid paint waste can then be disposed of in general waste.
- > Clean paintbrushes from oil based paints in a series of solvent baths. Solvent can be reused several times and must be stored in labelled, sealed containers. Dispose of waste solvent through a hazardous waste contractor. Do not place in a normal bin or on the ground.
- > Mix concrete in a designated area capable of containing all excess water, residues and waste.
- > Collect and dispose of waste so it cannot pollute the stormwater system.
- > Ensure all building work that generates noise is conducted within the time periods detailed in the Regulation.

Building work details	Monday to Saturday	Sunday and Public Holidays
Industrial, city and town centre areas	6am to 8pm	6am to 8pm
Any other area when work is completed within two weeks	7am to 8pm	8am to 8pm
Any other area when work is not completed within two weeks	7am to 6pm	Building work not to exceed Noise Standard*

MAINTENANCE OR REPAIR WORK DETAILS

Maintenance or repair work can be conducted from 7am to 8pm Monday to Saturday and 8am to 8pm Sunday and public holidays subject to the following:

- > any noise exceeding a noise standard* is emitted for periods totalling not more than 40 hours in any eight week period
- > any equipment being used is maintained and operated in accordance with the manufacturer's specifications (if any).

*For more information regarding Noise Standards refer to Schedule 2 of the Environment Protection Regulation 2005.

VEHICLES AND EQUIPMENT

Ensure washwater does not enter the stormwater system. Wash vehicles and equipment on an appropriately vegetated area or in an approved wash bay. Do not wash vehicles in the street or driveway. Be aware of ACT water restrictions.

- > Do not degrease or carry out major mechanical repairs on site. All pollutants must be collected and disposed of appropriately.
- > When transporting equipment cover loose items such as packaging material and sand with a tarpaulin to ensure material is contained on the vehicle and does not pollute the roadway.

CHEMICAL STORAGE AND HANDLING

Pesticides can be introduced to the aquatic environment by spillage, accidental discharge or direct use near aquatic environments. Do not allow chemicals to enter the stormwater system.

- > Always read the label before using the chemical and follow label instructions.
- > Store chemicals in a hard stand area where spills will be contained. In the event of spills, use temporary booms or bunding to soak up runoff before it reaches the street. Develop a spill response procedure and have your spill kit handy in case of an accidental spill onto sealed surfaces.
- > Store chemicals as hazardous goods and keep a Material Safety Data Sheet for every chemical. Contact a hazard waste contractor to dispose of unwanted chemicals.
- > Triple rinse empty chemical containers and puncture them before disposal.
- > Contact Access Canberra on 13 22 81 for more information on disposal.

Under the Act it is a requirement to hold an Environmental Authorisation for the commercial use of AgVet Chemicals (e.g. herbicides/insecticides). For more details contact the EPA by calling Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Under the Act it is an offence for a person to allow any substance other than rainwater to enter the stormwater system. Contraventions of the Act can lead to an on-the-spot fine of up to \$200 for an individual and \$1,000 for a company. For more serious offences, penalties may exceed \$10,000.

In the case of excessive noise, a complaint may be lodged with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). A complaint regarding noise pollution will be considered by the EPA only if it is made by a person affected by

the noise. The EPA will investigate the problem and, depending on the circumstances, a warning letter, on-the-spot fine or an Environment Protection Order (EPO) may be issued. A breach of an EPO is a serious offence and could lead to prosecution in court.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Contact the EPA by calling Access Canberra on 13 22 81 or email environment.protection@act.gov.au

Go to www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au for more environmental protection information relating to your industry.