

MOBILE PET GROOMING BUSINESSES

This information aims to assist mobile pet grooming businesses to comply with their general environmental duty by preventing pollutants generated by their activities from entering the environment.

BENEFITS FOR YOU AND YOUR BUSINESS

You can improve the public image of your business and minimise/remove the risk of environmental fines and prosecutions by complying with the *Environment Protection Act 1997* (the Act) and the *Environment Protection Regulation 2005*.



WHAT THE ACT MEANS TO YOU

Pet washing and grooming activities can potentially pollute the environment. Think about your work practices and how they might impact on land, water and air in the area you are working. In addition, consider the impact noise generated from your activity may have on the surrounding community.

Water

Stormwater drains empty into our creeks, lakes and rivers without treatment. All water that enters the stormwater system will affect the water quality downstream. The Act aims to protect our aquatic environments by keeping stormwater as clean as possible.

Air

The Act also aims to ensure that air quality in the ACT meets national standards and to minimise environmental harm from local emission of dust, fumes and other airborne pollutants.

Noise

Certain activities can generate levels of noise ranging from being a nuisance to actually damaging people's health. The Act aims to protect people from undue noise whilst enabling them to carry out their business and social activities. Noise levels and operating times must be followed.

Land

Certain activities can lead to contamination of the land. All practical measures should be employed to prevent contamination of the land from hazardous substances.

PLAN AHEAD

- > Educate your staff/franchisees on proper wastewater disposal methods. Ensure you can distinguish the difference between the sewerage and stormwater systems.
- > Check with clients when booking the job that access to the sewer is available for disposal of wastewater. Sudsy water from pet washing should be directed to the sewer via the client's outside gully trap or laundry (with ACTEW Water approval). Ensure that wastewater is filtered to meet ACTEW Water specifications. Contact ACTEW Water on 131 493 for more information.
- > If a sewer inlet is not available, it may be directed to the client's garden (if the client approves) or to a container on your mobile vehicle so you can dispose of it to sewer elsewhere. Do not allow runoff to leave your client's property or enter the stormwater system.
- > Consider installing tanks under your trailer to enable you to store wastewater for later disposal.
- > Keep your equipment maintained to cut the risk of leaks and regularly cleaned so that any leaks can be seen quickly.
- > Ensure the washing container is big enough to prevent spillages.
- > Store all chemicals in spill proof containers, for example place all bottles into a solid plastic tub.
- > Use biodegradable, pyrethrum-based products wherever possible. These products are not allowed to enter the stormwater system.
- > Ensure all staff/franchisees have a plan to deal with spills and a spill kit in the vehicle at all times. Do not hose spills into the stormwater system. In the event of a spill, ensure that the spill kit is used and that contaminated material is disposed of appropriately. Replace items in the spill kit that are used.

ON THE JOB

- > The stormwater system is for rain water only. No products are allowed to enter the stormwater system, including environmentally friendly products.
- > Prevent wastewater, including rinse water, from entering the stormwater system. Identify stormwater system entry points at each job and ensure your wastewater cannot flow into them – protect with bunds if needed.
- > Control powders and airborne sprays so they cannot land on surfaces where rain will wash them into the stormwater system.
- > Use bunds and spill trays under work areas to collect any mess.

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- > Store and handle detergents and chemicals in a bunded (or contained) area where spills are not able to enter the stormwater system.
- > Flea rinse containing other compounds should only be used in situations where the wastewater can be disposed of to sewer (with ACTEW Water approval). Flea rinses are pesticides and can cause environmental harm if allowed to enter the stormwater system or directed to the client's garden.
- > Dogs that have been treated for pests in the past two days should not be washed.
- > Rinse containers into your cleaning equipment to use the very last of detergent.
- > Limit the amount of water used.
- > Ensure work is carried out during approved hours and locate noisy machinery away from nearby residents.

CLEANING UP

After a job, always wash or clean out equipment into a sink or container, or onto grass.

Recycle detergent and chemical containers.

Use waste bins with lids so that litter does not blow around. Solid waste products such as dog hair/fur, nails and other sediment may be disposed of in general garbage.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

If a spill of chemical or wastewater occurs in the stormwater system, stop the source, contain it and clean it up. If the spill is too large to handle on your own or you don't have the appropriate clean up materials, contact the fire brigade as soon as possible. If a pollution incident does occur, you must report the incident to the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) immediately by calling Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

Under the Act it is an offence for a person to allow contaminated water to enter the stormwater system. Penalties can range from \$100 on-the-spot fines to court fines of up to \$50,000, six months in jail and a criminal record.

In the case of excessive noise a complaint may be lodged with the 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 a warning letter, on the spot fine, or depending on the circumstances, an Environment Protection Order may be issued. If the noise continues to be a problem, it 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 other information relating to your industry.