Installing appropriate pollution control measures during construction is important to prevent environmental degradation as well as for the developer and builder. A development without adequate controls increases costs (e.g. through replacing washed away stockpiles and clean up costs), as well as fines and a loss of business reputation.

EROSION AND SEDIMENT CONTROL

Sediment controls assist in filtering sediment (soil, sand and dust), and preventing it from entering the stormwater system. Without effective erosion and sediment control, large amounts of soil can be lost from a building site causing hazards, nuisance, environmental degradation, and damage to infrastructure.

Sediment in our waterway pollutes our creeks, lakes and rivers and has a major impact on water quality, aquatic plants and animals. Sediment can clog streams, reduce the storage volume of reservoirs, and increase filtration costs for municipal water supplies.

Erosion and sediment control measures can include site stabilisation (including vegetation and stabilised access point), sediment barriers, stockpile management. For more information on what is required see the Environment Protection Guidelines for Construction and Land Development in the ACT.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

It is the responsibility of the developer/builder to ensure that pollution control measures are in place before work commences and are adequately maintained throughout construction until the site is fully stabilised.

The developer/builder must ensure all workers (including subcontractors, delivery drivers, etc) are aware of their responsibilities to protect the environment. You can win peak industry awards for best environmental practice by implementing environment protection controls resulting in wide promotion of your business.

A series of 6 information sheets outlining best practice guidelines to prevent pollution from residential building sites has been developed to assist builders and developers in meeting their responsibilities to prevent pollution. This is information sheet 1. The other information sheets are:

- Information Sheet 2: Site Excavation and Diversion or Catch Drains
- Information Sheet 3: Sediment Control Barrier
- Information Sheet 4: Stabilised Access Point
- Information Sheet 5: Material Stockpile and Waste Management
- Information Sheet 6: Designated Cutting Area and Wash Area
**NOISE**

Ensure all building work that generates noise is conducted within the allowed time periods.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building work details</th>
<th>Monday to Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday and Public Holidays</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Industrial, city and town centre areas</td>
<td>6am to 8pm</td>
<td>6am to 8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other area when work is completed within two weeks</td>
<td>7am to 8pm</td>
<td>8am to 8pm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Any other area when work is not completed within two weeks</td>
<td>7am to 6pm</td>
<td>Building work not to exceed Noise Standard</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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

**DUST**

Where building work generates dust, all reasonable and practicable measures must be taken to minimise that dust. This can often be achieved by dampening the ground with a light spray of water. Sites that remain exposed for long periods of time must have dust suppression methods applied. In addition, ensure loads are covered when transporting material. Refer to the General information Sheet - *Dust Suppression during Construction* for more information.

**FIRE**

Burning of waste materials on site is illegal. This includes plastics, chemicals or wood that is painted, chemically treated or contaminated with chemicals. A fire may be permitted for heating purposes provided it is in a brazier or constructed fireplace. Only seasoned untreated timber can be burnt for heating purposes.

**MAINTENANCE OF CONTROLS**

Regular maintenance of erosion and sediment controls is essential to their success.

- Ensure controls are checked daily and any repairs undertaken immediately.
- With regular maintenance and checks (especially after storm events), sediment fences can last for up to six months.
- A good maintenance program should include ongoing modification throughout the construction process.
- Aggregate may need to be reapplied to the entry/exits points.
- Ensure controls are put back in place if they are moved for any reason. It is important that controls are in place at the end of each day or before it rains.
- Advise all workers commencing work on the site of the importance of maintaining sediment controls and to keep vehicles off the site in wet weather.

**LEGAL REQUIREMENTS**

Under the *Environment Protection Act 1997* (the Act), it is an offence for a person to allow any substance other than rainwater to enter the stormwater system. It is also an offence to not comply with an approved Erosion and Sediment Control Plan.
Plan. Contraventions of the Act can lead to an on-the-spot fine of up to $200 for an individual or $1,000 for a company. More serious offences can lead to penalties of up to $50,000, six months in jail and a criminal record.

Note: The information provided is based on a typical building site in Canberra. It should be noted that some sites may need more control measures in place depending on slope or other characteristics specific to the site. Controls should be in place prior to works commencing.
PREVENT POLLUTION FROM RESIDENTIAL BUILDING SITES

1. Minimise disturbance when excavating
   Maintain a grassed area (vegetation buffer) if possible, it will act as a filter for sediment in runoff water and will improve the appearance of the site. Avoid clearing vegetation and excavating until building commences. (Refer to Information Sheet 1)

2. Catch drains and perimeter banks
   Divert up-slope water. Where practical, up-slope water should be diverted around the work site, it will help keep the site drier in wet periods. Ensure water is diverted onto stable areas with sediment controls, and not into neighbouring properties. Avoid directing water towards entry/exit points. (Refer to Information Sheet 2)

3. Sediment fence
   Geotextile sediment fencing, on its own or incorporating straw bale filters wrapped in biddum material must be installed along the lowest side/s of the site. Shade cloth is not adequate and is ineffective in controlling sediment. Controls should also be placed to protect any stormwater drains. (Refer to Information Sheet 3)

4. Stabilised access point/crossover
   All entry/exit points must be consolidated with crushed aggregate (or similar), extending from the road kerb to the building line. This allows all-weather access to your site and reduces the amount of soil carried off the site by vehicles. Stabilised access/crossover should be located as far away from the lowest point as possible. Roads must be kept clean at all times. (Refer to Information Sheet 4)

5. Verge management
   Builders and developers must comply with the approved Landscape Management Protection Plan (LMPP) for their site. The LMPP often requires fencing of the nature strip area to protect existing trees and footpaths. In some instances, approval may be granted for short term use of the nature strip area for storage or access purposes. (Refer to Information Sheet 5)

6. Stockpiles
   Ensure all building material and waste stockpiles are contained and stored behind the sediment fence. (Refer to Information Sheet 5)

7. Designated cutting area/wash area
   Ensure all wastewater from brick cutting, concrete works, painting, washing etc. does not enter the stormwater system. Onsite mixing or washing should be carried out in a designated contained area. (Refer to Information Sheet 6)

8. Toilet facilities
   The 'Work Health and Safety (Managing the Work Environment and Facilities) Code of Practice' states that you must provide access to toilets, or, provide portable toilets. The number of toilets provided should be at a rate as specified in the Code. (Phone Access Canberra on 13 22 81)

9. Perimeter fence
   A perimeter fence can prevent unauthorised persons gaining access to a site. You have a duty of care under the Work Health and Safety Act 2011 and Work Health and Safety Regulation 2011 to protect the public as well as workers from hazards associated with building works. It may also assist in protecting the verge.

10. Notice about building work sign
    A Notice About Building Work sign is required to be displayed on your site under the Building Act 2004.

Supported by:

Further Information | Phone: Access Canberra on 13 22 81 | Email: environment.protection@act.gov.au | Web: www.act.gov.au/accesscbr

Note: This guidance material has been prepared using the best information available to Access Canberra. Any information about legislative obligations or responsibilities included in this material is only applicable to the circumstances described in the material. You should always check the legislation referred to in this material and make your own judgement about what action you may need to take to ensure you have complied with the law. Accordingly, Access Canberra extends no warranties as to the suitability of the information for your specific situation.