

Preventing stormwater pollution

Information for food businesses



THE STORMWATER DRAIN IS JUST FOR RAIN

This project has been assisted by the Victorian Government through Melbourne Water Corporation as part of the Living Rivers Stormwater Program.

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Our Council's Commitment



Mornington Peninsula Shire Council has developed a strong commitment to sustainable resource management for over a decade. This is supported by strong community values in environment protection and long-term ecological balance.

The boot-shaped promontory we live on, 'The Peninsula', separates two contrasting bays, Port Phillip and Western Port and is almost entirely surrounded by sea, with coastal boundaries of over 190 kilometres. This represents a total of approximately 10 per cent of Victoria's coastline.

Therefore, the quality of our water on the peninsula is of high importance. The bays and waterways form an essential part of the peninsula's environment, lifestyle and economy. Council continues to support our businesses to protect this natural and highly valued environment. Minimising the impact of business and industry on the environment by encouraging environmentally sustainable business practices is imperative.

Council is very pleased to be working collaboratively with local food businesses, landlords, research organisations and other government agencies to ensure a joint approach to long term water quality management and improvements. Together we strive to achieve practical solutions that are good for business and our environment. With greater understanding of how waste and waste-water in food businesses should be managed, we can improve the quality of the water that ends up in our creeks and beaches, ensuring it remains healthy and attractive for our community and visitors.

We all have a role to play in protecting our natural environment and Council is pleased to be leading this initiative with Melbourne Water's support. We encourage businesses to use these materials as a tool to assist in improving staff awareness on preventing stormwater pollution and protecting our waterways and beaches.

Top five things you can do to keep waterways clean!

Preventing rubbish, grease, oil and other contaminants from entering the stormwater drainage system in the first place is the most effective way to reduce stormwater pollution. Key tips for protecting stormwater and our waterways are:

1. Check your drains

- Check which drains on your premises are connected to sewer and your Food and Oil Interceptor ('grease trap')
- Label the stormwater drains on or near your premises 'Stormwater Drain Just for Rain' and inform all staff. If unsure please contact a plumber
- Keep all drains clear and clean of litter
- Sweep paved areas clear of rubbish
- Make sure food waste, detergents or oil cannot spill from your grease trap, rubbish bin or yard into the stormwater drains

2. Wash equipment and floors responsibly

- Make sure you and your staff have easy access to an appropriate 'Cleaner Sink' or drain, connected to your Food and Oil interceptor ('grease trap'), for disposing of wash/waste-water. This sink should be clearly labelled 'Cleaner Sink, waste water only'
- Make sure dirty, soapy or oily waters eg. from floor mopping, high pressure cleaning (floors, walls or roofs), exhaust filter cleaning, floor mat cleaning, or any cleaning containing flaking or left over residual paint or chemicals are tipped into the 'Cleaner Sink' or drain
- Take bins or exhaust fan equipment needing a wash to a suitable wash provider, hire a wash/exchange service or ensure that wash-waters are tipped to a suitable laundry or cleaner sink, if cleaned onsite.
- Use biodegradable cleaning products, where possible





3. Secure your bins and outside items

- Make sure your bins have secure lids so that litter does not blow around
- Ensure that there are no cracks or leaks in your bins and that they are not overflowing
- Avoid positioning your bins above a stormwater drain, where possible

4. Store and manage your bulk liquids appropriately

- Make sure stored chemicals, detergents and oils don't leak and are stored securely in an undercover area, away from any stormwater drains
- Ensure that anything that could wash off the site is stored in a bunded (raised barrier) area or over a collection tray to prevent them getting into stormwater drains

5. Responding to issues

- In the event of contamination, contain, collect or redirect the flow as quickly as possible away from the stormwater drain and secure the area
- Contact council regarding the incident so that advice regarding appropriate clean up action can be undertaken if necessary

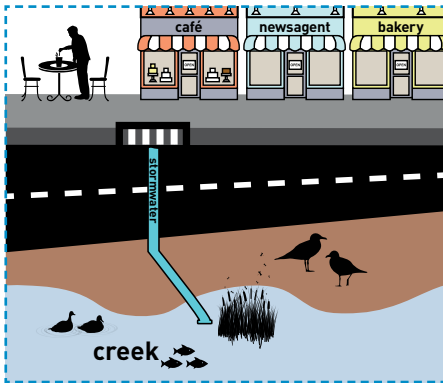
Together we can continue to protect our creeks and bays by keeping the "Stormwater Drain Just For Rain".



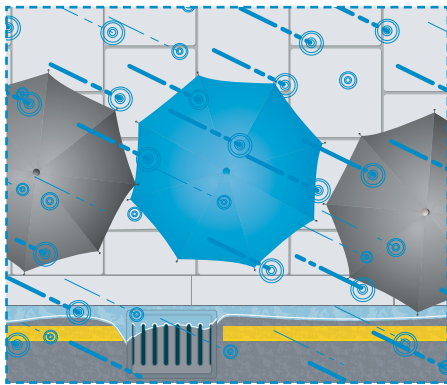
What is stormwater?

Stormwater is the water that runs off after rain. When it rains, water runs off your roof and into downpipes, or off the ground and into the nearest stormwater drain.

After flowing into gutters, swales or drains, stormwater runs through underground drains into natural waterways, creeks, rivers or bay/ocean without any treatment to remove pollution.



Stormwater from outside surfaces, grates and gutters flows directly into creeks, rivers or the bay/ocean



Only RAIN goes down the stormwater drain – never tip waste water into your stormwater drains.



Most stormwater pollution comes from everyday activities. Small amounts of pollution from homes and businesses cause more stormwater pollution than a major spill or industrial accident. Commercial businesses have the potential to pollute stormwater through everyday activities such as sweeping litter into gutters, hosing spills into gutters or drains, or tipping dirty soapy or oily water into gutters or drains.

It is important that you prevent stormwater pollution from your site by ensuring that the "Stormwater Drain is Just for Rain".

What is stormwater pollution?

Each time it rains, water flows over outdoor surfaces and washes any litter, oils, grease, detergent or other pollutants on roads, footpaths and yards into stormwater drains. Unfortunately, stormwater is then often polluted with these substances and they end up in our waterways. These pollutants damage our waterways and can harm the plants, animals and even our own health when we swim, boat or fish there.

Stormwater pollution includes many waste products **from businesses**. Even 'natural' waste such as **food waste, grass or plant clippings or soil** can cause serious problems. Such items are unsightly, can block drains and cause flooding, and can also use up oxygen in water as they decompose.



Common types of stormwater pollutants and their effects

Detergent or other cleaning agents (from floor mopping, bin washing, etc.) promotes growth of weeds and algae, can cause algal blooms, and can be directly harmful to plants and animals.

Litter can choke animals, block stormwater drains, and is unsightly. Plastic bottles and food wrappers are among the most common types of litter.

Organic matter, including food waste that decomposes in waterways is smelly and unsightly, and also causes low oxygen levels in the water which can lead to stress in aquatic life.

Oil and grease leave a film on water that sticks to plants and animals and makes it hard for them to breathe and swim. It only takes a very small amount of oil to pollute a very large volume of water, so it is important to prevent even small leaks, spills and drips of oil from your business entering stormwater drains.

Cigarette butts are a major source of litter in stormwater drains and waterways. They contain toxic chemicals and persist in the natural environment for many years. They are harmful to aquatic life as they are often mistaken for food and ingested. According to Keep Australia Beautiful, '6 out of 10 Australian smokers in outdoor settings litter their butts' and 'approximately 7 billion of the 24 billion filtered cigarettes sold every year in Australia are littered.' Much of this ends up as litter in our waterways.



Why is it important to prevent stormwater pollution?

Because it's the **LAW!** Fines apply if you or anyone at your business causes stormwater pollution. Under the Environment Protection Act 1970 and Council's Local Laws, businesses have a responsibility to prevent the discharge of waste from their property. These laws exist to protect our natural environment. A range of different fines can be issued by both EPA and Council.

On the spot fines of over \$295 (for small items, lit butts: \$590) can be issued by Council Officers for littering; in serious cases the offender can be charged and prosecuted through the court system and fines of more than \$7,000 can apply.

It is also an offence to require or ask another person to commit an offence (for instance if an employer asks a staff member to dispose of waste incorrectly).

In this case the infringement penalty is over \$1,000 - and can be more than double that, if the matter is taken to court.

Remember that you are responsible for the actions of all your staff so ensure they are correctly trained and supervised.

How do we prevent stormwater pollution? By ensuring that ONLY RAIN GOES DOWN THE STORMWATER DRAIN. All other waste must be correctly disposed of, and waste water discharged only to the sewerage or septic system.

As well as preventing stormwater pollution, good environmental management can benefit your business in other ways.

For example, picking up litter outside your business stops it from being washed into stormwater, but is also important in maintaining a clean business that will attract customers. Careful use and storage of liquids, for example oil, helps prevent spills (which can run into stormwater and damage waterways). This also provides a safer work environment for your staff, with less risk of trips and slips, or fire. A clean, tidy, and environmentally friendly business is attractive to customers. Research shows that customers care about the environment and choose to shop with businesses that 'Do the Right Thing' environmentally.



Clean stormwater helps keep our creeks, rivers, lakes, beaches, bays and oceans healthy. Pollutants in stormwater can harm or kill aquatic life that live in waterways, including many endangered species and native animals. Reducing stormwater pollution also helps ensure clean and healthy waterways for our recreational uses such as walking, fishing and boating.

Know your drains!

Most areas have two separate drainage systems. A stormwater drainage system to collect rain, and a sewer system to collect and properly treat waste water.

The stormwater system: The stormwater system consists of the swales, gutters, street drains and underground pipes. They collect rain run off and carry it to the nearest waterway. This water is not treated to remove pollution before it reaches our waterways. Litter, food waste and grease that washes down drains in retail areas will end up in our creeks and rivers.

The sewer system: Waste water, is used or contaminated water resulting from household or business operations. Waste water includes all dirty water used for cleaning, washing, mopping floors etc. The sewerage system collects waste water from toilets, kitchen, bathroom and laundry fixtures (eg toilet, sinks and floor drains) and carries it to a sewage treatment plant.

Waste water from all commercial kitchens and food preparation facilities must be discharged to sewer, typically via an appropriately sized and maintained Food and Oil Interceptor

(Grease Trap). Stormwater drains must never be connected to the sewer system or vice versa.

NEVER tip waste water into gutters or street drains.

The sewer system is managed by a local water retailer. See contact information on back cover and/or check your water bill for more information about your local water authority.

In areas where there is no formal sewer system, the waste water must be collected, treated and reused or discharged by an individual onsite waste water treatment system, 'septic tank system'. Local council is responsible for issuing permits to install or alter domestic waste water systems. Contact your local water authority to find out if your property is sewered and council regarding permits and information on installation and management of waste water treatment systems. For more information on approved waste water treatment systems and guidance on the management of onsite waste water systems in both the domestic and industrial sectors refer to EPA's website.



THE STORMWATER DRAIN IS JUST FOR RAIN

Know your drains

Ensure you understand which drains on your site go to stormwater and which go to the sewer. If unsure please contact a plumber, refer to the site map or check with your local water retailer. Label drains clearly and make sure staff are trained correctly.

Key features of sewer/food & oil interceptor connected drains vs stormwater drains:

Sewer Drains:

Most suitable waste water disposal method

Sink dedicated to waste water disposal with pipes connected to the Food and Oil Interceptor/'grease trap' or is clearly a 'Cleaner Sink'



Sewer Drain: Suitable to dispose of waste water

Internal graded floor waste drain



Sewer Drain: Suitable to dispose of waste water. Be mindful of wet floors.

Drain is 'bundled' (ie. it has a raised wall around it to prevent stormwater entering it)



Sewer Drain: Not suitable to dispose of waste water, unless it is connected to your grease trap

Drain is raised approx. 75mm above ground and often surrounded by a concrete mound –an 'overflow relief gully'



Sewer Drain: Not suitable to dispose of waste water, as it may overflow

Stormwater Drains:

Sunken grate in concreted
or garden area



Stormwater Drain

Street gutters & roadway drains

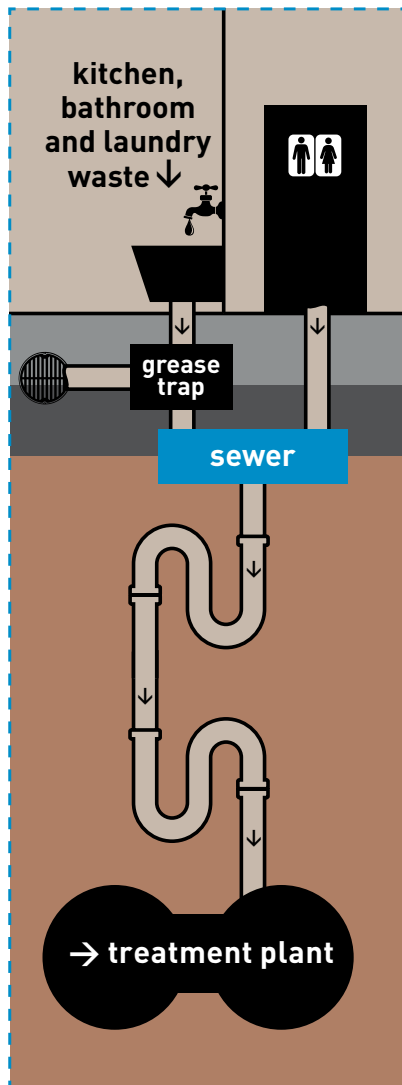


Stormwater Drain

Stormwater downpipes are
connected to the drain



Stormwater Drain



Waste water from sinks, toilets
and floor waste drains inside your
business goes through the sewer
system to a water treatment plant.

If unsure please contact a plumber, refer to the site map
or query with your local water retailer

How to prevent common causes of stormwater pollution

Oil and grease

- It is against the law to allow any oily waste into stormwater drains. Oil solidifies in drains and can cause blockages; it also contaminates water in rivers and harms plants and animals. A little bit of oil can do a LOT of damage – just one litre of oil can contaminate one million litres of water.
- Make sure oil is not kept anywhere where it could spill into drains, and never hose oily water or waste into gutters or stormwater drains. If oil enters your stormwater drains – even by accident – you can be fined. Cooking oil should be stored in a secure area that does not drain to stormwater. Materials to soak up spills and prevent them reaching drains should be kept nearby.

Never tip oil into drains. Large quantities of used cooking oil must be collected by a licensed waste contractor. Search the internet or the Yellow Pages for 'cooking oil collection' to find suitable contractors in your area. Many Council Transfer Stations also offer free drop-off of small quantities of used cooking oil. Contact Council.

- Businesses that cook food have an exhaust canopy over cooking areas. Make sure this is cleaned on a regular basis by a licensed contractor. Dirty canopies can leak grease onto your roof and into stormwater drains, and also pose a fire risk.



Reduce litter from street tables. Avoid small items such as sugar sachets and provide windproof ashtrays for customers that smoke.



Cigarette butts

- Butts disposed of by your staff and customers are your responsibility. Provide secure, wind proof ash trays and cigarette butt bins for staff and customers, and ensure they are used.
- Encourage correct behaviour from staff and customers by displaying signage and providing bins.
- Be aware that dropping cigarette butts is a littering offence for which ON THE SPOT FINES apply (At the time of printing the fines were \$590 for a lit butt or \$295 per unlit butt or other small littered item).



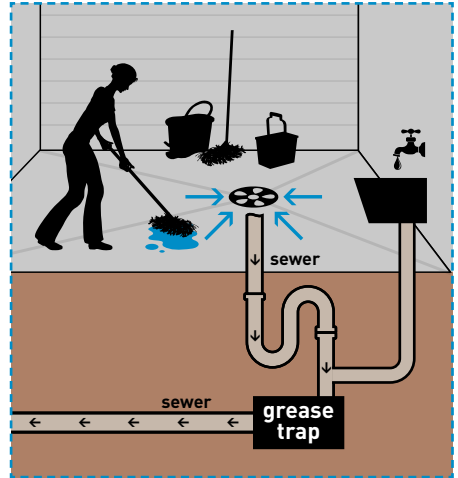
Litter

- All litter in outside areas of your business should be swept up and put into a bin to ensure that litter cannot blow or wash into gutters and drains. Make sure that all outside areas, stormwater gutters, drains and grates are free of litter and other waste at all times.
- Encourage use of reusable rather than disposable plastic bags and containers to reduce the amount of litter generated by your business.
- Think about minimising the use of packaging that can easily become litter; provide tap water rather than bottled water.
- Be careful with glass; broken glass that washes into waterways can seriously harm animals.
- Provide secure, windproof litter bins and ensure they are used by both staff and customers.

Waste management – waste water from cleaning

Dispose of mop water into a cleaners sink or an internal drain that is dedicated to waste water disposal and goes to a grease trap and the sewer.

- **Never tip mop water down stormwater drains.** Water used for cleaning contains harmful pollutants and must be disposed of as waste water to the sewer. Dispose of mop water to a cleaners sink, or any internal drain (such as a floor drain in a bin wash area) that goes to your grease trap.
- Use environmentally friendly cleaning products instead of harsh chemicals that produce poisonous fumes and pollute water.
- If you wash bins, make sure it is in an area that drains to the grease trap and sewer. Never wash bins outside on hard surfaces that drain to stormwater. You can arrange to have your bin exchanged for a clean bin with your waste bin provider or there are also 'mobile' binwashing contractors available they will wash bins on-site and all waters are contained onboard the service vehicle.



THE STORMWATER DRAIN IS JUST FOR RAIN

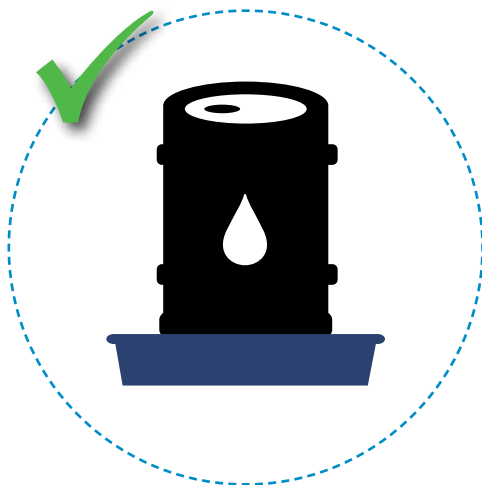
Waste management – liquids and liquids waste

- Never tip oil, chemicals, detergents, or water containing these substances into stormwater drains. Never hose down floors, driveways, yards or bin storage areas that drain into stormwater.

It is illegal to tip oil down stormwater or sewer drains or throw it out with your rubbish. Store waste oil securely and have it collected by a licensed contractor. Search the internet or the Yellow Pages for 'cooking oil collection' to find appropriate contractors to collect your waste oil. Many Council Transfer Stations also offer free drop off of small quantities of used cooking oil. Contact your Local Council.

- Liquids must be stored in an area where any spills can be contained so it is easy to clean them up. Liquid spills should be soaked up with absorbent material then swept up and thrown in bins.
- Keep a spill kit on-site. Search the internet or the Yellow Pages for 'spill kits' to find suppliers of spill kits.

- A spill kit contains absorbent material such as sawdust or kitty litter that can be used to soak up liquid spills. Never hose spills or litter into drains. Sweep up the used material and dispose of properly.
- Liquid storage areas should have sealed floors and be undercover. Keep storage areas clear and uncluttered to prevent unnecessary spills. If storing liquids such as used cooking oil outside, keep lids on all drums, keep drums undercover and protected from rain, keep a spill kit or clean up materials nearby, and try and store in a bunded area. A bund is a raised barrier that contains liquids in the event of a spill, so that the liquid can be absorbed with dry material and thrown away, rather than allowed to run into drains.



Waste management – bins and solid rubbish

Recycle as much as you can !

Securely close bin lids to prevent rubbish or litter being washed or blown out into the surrounding environment.

Rubbish bins and waste storage areas that are uncovered and unprotected from wind and rain are a common source of litter and stormwater pollution. Litter can easily be blown into stormwater drains from these areas. Under the law, storing waste in an area where it is likely to leak, spill, fall or be blown into any drain or gutter is considered to be pollution and you may be fined.

- Use bins that are large enough for your needs to prevent any overflow of litter, and keep lids closed at all times.

- Minimise the amount of waste generated by your business operations by recycling cardboard, paper, glass, aluminium, plastic, and cooking oil. Purchase supplies in recyclable containers.

- Keep bins and yards locked to prevent illegal dumping.

- Minimise the amount of waste stored or thrown out from your site, separate items for recycling wherever possible.

- Ensure waste bins are free from cracks and holes to prevent liquids from leaking into the nearest stormwater drain or gutter. Holes must never be punched or drilled into bins – this allows liquid wastes and contaminated bin water to drain into stormwater.

- Search the Web or Yellow Pages under 'Waste Reduction and Disposal Services' to find waste and recycling contractors.



Trade waste

All commercial businesses that prepare food must be registered with the local water authority and have a Trade Waste Consent. A Trade Waste Consent is a licence or permit to discharge waste water into the sewer.

Trade waste is waste water generated as the result of commercial or industrial processes and **includes waste water generated from washing, cleaning or rinsing processes that may contain chemicals, fats or detergents.**

While sewage is treated, correct use of the sewer system is still important to ensure that the system is not overloaded. **An overload of the sewer system results in a spill to the stormwater system and the environment.** In order to properly manage and treat waste water, water authorities must understand the volume and composition of waste water being disposed from your site. This means that you must have a Trade Waste Consent. These can be obtained by contacting your water retailer (see contacts list on back cover.)



Food and Oil Interceptors 'Grease traps'

Food businesses that have a Trade Waste Consent and discharge waste into the sewer **also require a grease trap**. Waste water from all kitchen fixtures, including hand basins and sinks travel through the grease trap unit and then into the sewer system.

A grease trap is designed to:

- Trap food particles, which settle to the bottom of the pit.
- Trap grease, oil and fats which float to the top of the pit and eventually harden into a solid.
- Allow the waste water that is in between the floating layer of fats and grease and the food particles at the bottom, to pass into the sewer.

Grease traps must be properly installed and maintained, including regular cleaning and emptying by licensed contractors. **Regular cleaning means approximately every three months**. This will reduce sewer blockages and maintenance costs, and reduce sewer spills which impact heavily on the community and the environment.

Find contractors to clean and maintain your grease trap by searching the Web or Yellow Pages under 'Grease Trap Cleaning Services'.

DO NOT dispose of large volumes of oil to your grease trap. **Waste oil must be recycled through a licensed contractor.**



Please contact your waste contractor as soon as possible if your bins are leaking, broken, or you need more bins or more frequent collection to prevent bins overflowing.

Prepare your workplace and staff to avoid stormwater pollution!

Correct environmental management depends on having a properly set up business and having well trained staff.

- Make sure that your premises has appropriate access to a 'cleaner sink' or drain connected to your Food and Oil interceptor (grease trap) for disposing of wash/waste - waters.
- Make stormwater and litter awareness part of staff training. Provide this booklet and display the poster in a highly visibale location to inform and remind all staff. Ensure all of your staff are trained in techniques to avoid stormwater pollution.
- Keep your site clean and ensure that cleaning and proper waste management is part of regular staff duties, with sufficient allocation of time and resources made available.
- Identify drains near your shop or restaurant and make sure stormwater and sewer drains are clearly identified and labelled. Make sure staff know the difference between sewer and stormwater drains, and understand the consequences of stormwater pollution.
- Remember that you are responsible for the actions of your staff. In some circumstances, you can be fined if your staff do the wrong thing.



Work with your community

Working closely with your community and with other traders can help you to prevent stormwater pollution, save you time and money, and help strengthen and beautify your area.

- Get together with other traders to pool resources and share expenses, for instance by organising shared recycling collections, splitting call out fees for tradesmen, shared cleaner sink or sharing information on suppliers.
- Work with your neighbours to keep watch for illegal dumping and pollution. If you witness pollution please call the EPA immediately on the [Pollution Watch Hotline](#) on 1300 372 842 or 1300 EPA VIC.
- Promote environmental messages; use ashtrays, stickers, posters to show that you are doing the right thing and encourage others to do the same. Promote your environmental compliance to customers – ‘green’ conscious customers will choose environmentally friendly shops and restaurants.

- Ensure staff are trained, investigate opportunities for joint training and interactions with local traders’ associations. Share knowledge and resources.
- Working together improves the amenity of the area and attracts customers. Make a commitment with local traders to pick up litter and dispose of waste correctly.
- A clean, tidy area prevents smells, helps prevent rodents, and attracts customers – sweep up your rubbish frequently and dispose of it into a secure bin.
- Save money by increasing recycling and reuse of items within your business and consider swapping and trading with neighbours. Search the Web or Yellow Pages under ‘Recycling Services’ to find contractors to collect your recyclable waste, or refer to the SustainMe Application or Planet Ark business recycling website.

Further assistance and information

Your local council can assist with enquiries regarding Local Laws, Environment, and Waste. Contact your council for information regarding; improving the environmental sustainability of your business, waste management and laws, recycling, environmental policies, guidelines and strategies, and littering.

Littering offences can also be reported to Council. Councils run a number of programs and initiatives that can assist you in reducing waste, energy and water consumption at your business, which can also save you money. See back cover for Council contact details.

Your water retailer is responsible for the issuing and regulation of Trade Waste Consents. Contact your water retailer to apply for a Trade Waste Consent or for advice about how to comply with your trade waste obligations. Water retailers run programs that are particularly relevant to food businesses and can also advise on starting or selling a business, ways to reduce water and waste, water quality, and building and renovating.

Water retailers regularly monitor trade waste discharges into the sewerage system and run a robust compliance and assistance program. For water retailer contact details please see back cover or check your water bill.

The Environment Protection Authority (EPA) administers and enforces the Environment Protection Act 1970 which is Victoria’s primary environment protection legislation, with a basic philosophy of preventing pollution and environmental damage by setting environmental quality objectives and establishing programs to meet them. The EPA issues licences, conducts site inspections, and can issue Pollution Abatement Notices (PANS) or Pollution Infringement Notices (PINS) where people are causing pollution. Incidents can result in fines of up to \$250,000 and Court action. The EPA also provides information and guidance on waste and energy efficiency and stormwater management. For information and assistance with ways to reduce stormwater pollution please visit the EPA website at www.epa.vic.gov.au

If you witness pollution or you want to report a pollution incident please contact the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) Victoria. [The Pollution Watch Hotline](#) phone number for reporting pollution is 1300 372 842 or 1300 EPA VIC.

Mornington Peninsula Shire

**Mornington Peninsula
Business**

www.mornpen.vic.gov.au
www.mpbusiness.com.au
Ph: 1300 850 600 or 5950 1000



Water Retailer

South East Water

www.southeastwater.com.au
Ph: 131 694

Waste Services

**Planet Ark's Business
Recycling website**

BusinessRecycling.com.au
Hotline 1300 763 768

**SustainMe App
Recycling Application**

www.sustainme.com.au

Bin Wash Services

Yellow pages or Internet search for 'commercial bin washing' or contact your waste bin provider regarding 'other services'

**Biodegradable Cleaning
Products**

Yellow pages or Internet search for 'biodegradable commercial cleaning products' or 'commercial green cleaning products australia'

Cigarette Butt Ash Trays

Yellow pages or Internet search for 'windproof table ash trays'

Cleaner Sink Installation

Please contact your local plumber
Internet search 'Cleaner Sink' for more information on sinks

Cooking Oil Recycling

Yellow pages or Internet search for 'cooking oil collectors melbourne'. If your business doesn't have enough cooking oil to attract a cooking oil recycler's interest, consider collaborating with another neighbouring business

**Food & Oil Interceptor
(Grease Trap) Cleaning Service**

Refer to: <http://southeastwater.com.au/SiteCollectionDocuments/Business/Trade-Waste/FoodAndOilInterceptorTransporters.pdf>

**Kitchen Exhaust &
Canopy Cleaners**

Google 'kitchen exhaust & canopy cleaners' or 'filters & filter service'

Other websites you may find useful include:

EPA Victoria

www.epa.vic.gov.au

Melbourne Water

www.melbournewater.com.au

**Metropolitan Waste and
Resource Recovery Group**

www.mwrrg.vic.gov.au

Sustainability Victoria

www.sustainability.vic.gov.au

Victorian Litter Action Alliance

www.litter.vic.gov.au



CLEAN WATERWAYS ARE EVERYONE'S BUSINESS