

Regulation for Effective Sediment Management

InfoSheet for Local Government



Pollutants such as soil, sand and cement can be blown or washed away from building and construction sites. Appropriate erosion controls should be used on road work sites and residential, commercial and industrial developments. When appropriate erosion controls are not used, soil, sand and cement travels through the stormwater drainage system and can pollute local parks and sensitive environments such as rivers, wetlands and oceans.

Sediment discharge as described above is not regulated by the State Government. Local Government has the opportunity to regulate sediment management through local laws which can address this issue that affects infrastructure, the local community and the environment.

Local Government plays an Important Role

Together with builders, residents and environmental managers, Local Governments are working to control sediment to:

- Reduce the risk of houses and roads flooding as a result of blocked stormwater drains;
- Reduce the risks of accidents on roads and paths;
- Prevent sediment from covering grass in parks that receive stormwater runoff;
- Help to maintain stormwater management systems such as biofilters, pervious paving, infiltration cells and tree pits that are critical to protecting our rivers, wetlands, marshlands and oceans;
Protect hydrological functions of rivers, wetlands and other waterways;
Prevent sediment from smothering the reeds, plants and seagrasses that keep our rivers, wetlands and oceans healthy;
- Ensure river pools continue to provide a vital refuge for fauna during long hot summers and dry seasons;
- Protect aquatic invertebrates and benthic algae populations, whose presence is necessary for water ways to remain healthy ecosystems;
- Prevent fish, prawns, crabs and other aquatic wildlife being killed due to the detrimental effects of sediments entering ecosystems;
- Reduce nutrient enrichment of waterways and associated algal blooms; and
- Prevent the creation of breeding grounds for pest and potential disease causing mosquitoes and midges and protect public health from mosquito-borne diseases and pathogens.

Local Government can expend large amounts of time and money on:

- sweeping roads;
- repairing and maintaining stormwater management systems;
- responding to public complaints; and
- remediating or restoring rivers, wetlands and parks.

Drains are Just for Rain

In addition to enacting local laws to effectively manage sedimentation, Local Governments can:

- Issue sediment control advice with building approvals;
- Include sediment control in compliance action;
- Include planning approval conditions or advice notes requiring developers to control, mitigate and regularly sweep sediment drifts; and
- Manage public works to ensure best sediment control practice.

We all Benefit

Success in sediment control will:

- Reduce sand and sediment build-up on roads; and
- Reduce the costs to governments and the community for stormwater and river and wetland management;
- Protect our local parks (where stormwater is often discharged);
- Protect the rivers, wetlands and oceans that are icons of the natural beauty of Perth and regional Western Australia

For further information visit <https://perthnrm.com/resource/sediment-management/>

Prevention is better than any cure

Prevention of erosion, sand drift and sedimentation reduces the financial cost to local government for the remediation of stormwater infrastructure and the environment

Erosion, Sand Drift and Sediment

Local laws are a significant tool for managing compliance in regard to the prevention of erosion, sand drift and sediment loss at the subdivision and building stages, to protect amenity, stormwater infrastructure and the environment.

Existing local laws that can be used relate to health, private property, environment and nuisance management. Local Governments may choose to gazette a Site Erosion and Sand Drift Local Law.

The City of Nedlands and the Town of Claremont develop a local law to mitigate erosion and sedimentation

To save money and to protect their assets, the City of Nedlands updated its Site Erosion and Sand Drift Local Law 2014. Their local law was modelled on the Shire of Jerramungup's Dust and Sand Local Law 2011.

The benefits of adopting a Local Law for Site Erosion and Sand Drift for the City of Nedlands have been:

- Anecdotal evidence that builders operating in the City of Nedlands usually clean up once it is explained to them that the Local Law for Site Erosion and Sand Drift exists;
- All building permits can refer to the local law as an advice note; and
- A streamlined enforcement process.

The City of Nedlands can provide a copy of their local law and a template that your Local Government can use to draft their own local law. Please visit www.nedlands.wa.gov.au for your copy.

The Town of Claremont Site Erosion and Sand Drift Local Law 2016 was gazetted in October 2016. The purpose of this local law is to provide for the regulation, control and management of site erosion and sand on land within the district to protect amenity.

Prior to the introduction of this new local law, management of sand drift and dust controls required the Town of Claremont to prosecute offenders under the Health Act 1911 and Building Regulations 2012. In their experience, this proved difficult to show the true impact of the issue and specific authorised officers had to be available to make a determination of what was reasonable and injurious to health.

The new Site Erosion and Sand Drift Local Law enables the Town of Claremont to respond more quickly, including the ability to issue an on-the-spot infringement.

The City of Nedlands and the Town of Claremont encourages other Local Governments to develop a local law to mitigate erosion and sand drift.

The Sediment Task Force

Sediment Task Force members work together to provide leadership and coordination for sediment management; raise awareness, educate and build capacity; advocate for sediment control solutions; instigate organisational change to develop best practice in sediment management; and support research, knowledge and monitoring to enhance our understanding of the issue.

The Sediment Task Force is supported by:

- Leading industry groups (Housing Industry Association (WA), Master Builders Association of Western Australia and the Urban Development Institute of Australia (WA));
- WA State government agencies (Department of Environment Regulation, Department of Parks and Wildlife, Department of Water, Main Roads WA and the Water Corporation);
- WA Local Governments (WA Local Government Association, The Western Suburbs Regional Organisation of Councils (WESROC) and the Cities of Armadale, Gosnells and Subiaco); and
- WA community environment groups (Perth NRM and the South East Regional Centre for Urban Landcare).

On behalf of the Sediment Task Force, our appreciation goes to the City of Nedlands, the Town of Claremont and WESROC for their contribution to this Information Sheet.