

Best Management Practice Works within watercourses

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If you have any questions about this procedures sheet contact Auckland Council on 09 301 0101.

1. When should I use this sheet?

This applies to all sites involving works within watercourses, regardless of site size or duration of works.

2. What's the aim?

Stormwater systems must only drain rain

To eliminate or minimise stream channel damage, pollution of downstream receiving environments (stormwater, the sea or streams) and impacts on aquatic flora and fauna.

3. Why manage works within watercourses?

Watercourses are fragile environments that provide important ecological, public amenity and drainage functions to the region.

Works within watercourses pose a number of environmental risks to both the watercourse itself and the life within them.

If not managed appropriately, works can damage natural habitats, destabilise watercourse banks and beds, create barriers to fish, lead to contamination, damage aquatic plants and create a flooding risk.

4. Site management and environmental controls

Forward planning – before you start works

- When a project is being scoped, an assessment will be carried out by an experienced Environmental Planner which will identify whether works are within or close to a watercourse.

- Any works to be carried out within a watercourse will be well planned out and will be typically authorised by resource consents.
- These legal requirements will be defined in the project Compliance Management Plan – these may include Resource Consent Conditions, Permitted Activities, other Statutory Requirements and best practice guidelines.
- Complete the Environmental Task Analysis Form to identify potential environmental risks and define how environmental risks can be mitigated or reduced through site practices or environmental controls – your 'environmental toolbox'. Remember your activities will need to be in accordance with the legal requirements defined in the Compliance Management Plan.
- Make sure the person responsible (identified in Task Analysis) for ensuring environmental practices and controls has followed/implemented these prior to starting works.

Environmental practices and controls

- Don't operate any machinery within a watercourse, unless authorised by a resource consent.
- When constructing and removing temporary watercourse diversions, take care not to create unnecessary erosion and scour along the banks, in the stream bed, or downstream of the site. Make sure the diversion measures do not cause erosion or scouring at the discharge point.



- Construct temporary dams from non-erodible materials like sandbags and make sure they are removed as soon as possible after completion of works.
- Don't leave any construction materials, waste, debris or structures in the stream after works are completed.
- Keep as much streamside vegetation in place as possible as this stabilises banks and reduces erosion. Stabilise all disturbed areas as soon as possible after completion of works. Any removal of plants should be done with hand held tools to minimise habitat disturbance and erosion.
- Don't prepare construction materials, refuel machinery or carry out work in a way that could result in contaminants entering the watercourse.

Monitoring and maintenance

- Regularly assess site practices and environmental controls to make sure they are mitigating or reducing environmental risk to an acceptable level.
- Make regular inspections of site practices and environmental controls to ensure that all legal requirements are being met.
- Check that no erosion has occurred and that no sediment has entered the watercourse.

5. Tips

- Inspect site controls at least once a day to ensure they are working properly.
- Once construction is complete check that any structures are functioning as designed and that there is no damage to the watercourse.
- Have a spill response plan and a spill kit handy and make sure staff are well trained.

6. Useful links and information

- Go to aucklandcouncil.govt.nz and search for 'pollution', here you will find a range of helpful information and links to the range of pollution related resources and educational materials.
- Refer to the following Stormwater Unit BMPs:
 - Dewatering
 - Potentially contaminated sites
 - Dust and sediments
 - Spills and emergency management
 - Trees
 - Sites of significance.



If a discharge occurs that has the potential to, or has entered the stormwater system or natural receiving environments, contact the Auckland Council 24 HOUR POLLUTION HOTLINE on 09 377 3107 immediately.

► Find out more:

For access to this BMP and to find the other BMP information sheets, visit aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/stormwater

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