



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### **Hundreds of building sites inspected for run-off during waterway blitz**

Ongoing education and enforcement of sediment controls on building sites are key to preventing runoff from entering our local waterways, according to results from the latest *Get the Site Right* campaign.

Nineteen councils across Sydney and Lake Macquarie and the NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA) took part in a one-day blitz in October, with officers inspecting more than 400 building and construction sites for sediment and runoff controls.

Sixty-two per cent of sites were compliant with the runoff requirements and the number of 'repeat offenders' – those developers with multiple sites that were non-compliant – decreased by almost 30 per cent from the May results.

A total of \$76,330 in fines was issued to non-compliant sites, which is \$9,000 more than the total issued from the one-day blitz in May.

Get the Site Right targets erosion and sediment control on building and construction sites and highlights the impact of sediment laden runoff on our waterways.

It is a joint program between the Parramatta River Catchment Group, Cooks River Alliance, Georges River Combined Councils Committee, Sydney Coastal Councils Group, Lake Macquarie Council, NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Department of Planning, Industry and Environment (DPIE), and local councils.

EPA Regional Director Metropolitan Giselle Howard said construction sites were getting the message about sediment control.

"More than half of building and construction sites are doing the right thing when it comes to runoff, but we want to get that compliance rate even higher," Ms Howard said.

"The controls for runoff aren't recommendations – they are important rules construction sites need to follow to protect our waterways and aquatic life from the harm this sediment can cause."

"If we want our waterways to be thriving and swimmable, then we need to make sure everyone understands the impact their actions can have, and how following the rules is to everyone's benefit – including the environment's."

Parramatta River Catchment Group Chair Cr Mark Drury said holding multiple campaigns throughout the year was critical to reminding developers and builders about the role they play in protecting local waterways.

"With the large amount of development taking place across Sydney and the Central Coast, and demands on builders to meet tight deadlines, it can be tempting to cut costs or become complacent," Cr Drury said.

"Raising awareness about the environmental impact of construction on our waterways is an important part of our Masterplan to make the Parramatta River swimmable again by 2025."

Escaping sediment can affect our environment and waterways by:

- Destroying aquatic habitats and smothering native plants and animals that live in our waterways.
- Directly polluting creeks, rivers and harbours by filling them with dirt, soil, sand and mud. This leads to poorer water quality affecting swimming or leisure activities in and around our waterways.
- Blocking stormwater drains leading to flooding and overflows.
- Eroding creek and riverbanks.

Members of the public can report pollution incidents, including poor sediment control, to the EPA's 24/7 Environment Line on 131 555. More information about the campaign and the importance of erosion and sediment control is available at: [www.ourlivingriver.com.au/getthesiteright](http://www.ourlivingriver.com.au/getthesiteright)

**Agencies who participated in the one-day blitz:**

- Blacktown City Council
- Burwood Council
- Campbelltown City Council
- City of Canterbury Bankstown Council
- Cumberland City Council
- Fairfield City Council
- Inner West Council
- Lake Macquarie Council
- Liverpool City Council
- North Sydney Council
- Northern Beaches Council
- City of Parramatta Council
- Randwick Council
- City of Ryde Council
- Strathfield Council
- Sutherland Shire Council
- Waverley Council
- Willoughby Council
- Woollahra Council
- NSW EPA

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