

## MEDIA RELEASE

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# New litter prevention campaign aims to share the love for Sydney's waterways

Four of Sydney's catchment groups have joined forces to tackle the problem of litter and other pollution in our local waterways.

In July, the Cooks River Alliance, Georges Riverkeeper, Parramatta River Catchment Group (PRCG) and Sydney Coastal Councils Group will be launching the *Love Your Waterways* campaign. The month-long campaign encourages people to take up five simple actions to prevent litter, pet waste, gardening materials, chemicals and other pollutants from going into stormwater drains and out to local creeks, rivers, beaches, bays and other waterways:

1. Reduce your rubbish – Dispose of your litter correctly and swap single-use plastics for reusable products.
2. Leave only paw prints – Pick up pet waste to stop bacteria and other bugs from entering our waterways.
3. Wash it wisely – Wash your car and household equipment the right way to prevent cleaning products from affecting water quality and marine life.
4. Cover it up – Keep dirt, leaves and other garden waste away from stormwater drains.
5. Keep it clear – Rain water is the only thing that should go down a stormwater drain.

The campaign also aims to raise awareness about the difference between stormwater and wastewater systems and the harmful impact that common household products have on marine life.

According to the NSW Environment Protection Authority, stormwater runoff is the biggest source of pollution in our waterways.<sup>1</sup> The main pollutants in runoff include: chemicals, such as fertilisers and pesticides from agriculture or gardens; litter, such as cigarette butts, plastic bags and other rubbish; sediments, such as soil erosion from construction sites; and natural pollution, such as leaves, garden clippings and animal droppings.

PRCG Chair, Cr Mark Drury, said that campaigns such as *Love Your Waterways* play an important role in our plan to make the Parramatta River swimmable again.

"Reducing stormwater pollution is critical to improving water quality and creating a living river that sustains marine and plant life as well as the community," Cr Drury said.

"Whether it's picking up after your dog, disposing of household chemicals correctly, or just putting your rubbish in the bin, there's something we can all do to make our waterways clean and safe for everyone to enjoy."



*Love Your Waterways* follows the success of the *Get the Site Right* campaign, which is another joint initiative of the catchment groups that has been running for the past six years. The campaign targets erosion and sediment control on building and construction sites and highlights the impact of sediment-laden runoff on our waterways.

The *Love Your Waterways* campaign will be launched online and appear at various community events across Sydney. It will also support the work being undertaken for the Greater Sydney Harbour Litter Prevention Strategy.

To promote the campaign, we're running an Instagram competition with the opportunity to win some great prizes! To enter, simply take a photo of you, your family or friends performing one of the five *Love Your Waterways* actions, such as collecting and disposing of litter correctly or washing your car the right way. Tell us where the photo was taken and add the hashtag #LoveYourWaterwaysSydney. The competition runs from 1-31 July 2021 and people can enter as many times as they like. To find out more, including competition terms and conditions, visit: [www.ourlivingriver.com.au/loveyourwaterways](http://www.ourlivingriver.com.au/loveyourwaterways).

<sup>1</sup><https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/topics/water/water-quality/protecting-and-managing-water-quality/waterway-health>

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