



**MEDIA RELEASE**

**21 December 2022**

## **Record fines for non-compliant developments signals need for builders to get their site right**

As construction costs remain at record levels<sup>1</sup>, builders and developers are urged to check and maintain erosion and sediment controls on building and construction sites to avoid incurring costly fines.

The call for greater compliance comes following the recent Get the Site Right inspection Blitz Week in which \$596,064 in fines were issued – the highest amount since the campaign began in 2016.

Nineteen councils across Sydney and parts of regional NSW inspected 654 sites, of which 361 sites (55%) were found to be compliant – a one per cent increase on the May 2022 campaign.

Offences ranged from sediment tracking off the site, to no stabilised access point and building supplies stored on the nature strip.

By law, builders and developers are required to have a comprehensive erosion and sediment control plan for their site. Activities that cause a pollution incident can incur fines from \$8,000-\$15,000 for each incident.

The forecast of more severe weather in coming months, including heavy rain and damaging winds, provides a further incentive for builders to improve site controls to prevent costly building supplies from being washed or blown away and polluting local waterways.<sup>2</sup>

Parramatta River Catchment Group Chair, Cr Mark Drury, said that with the recent opening of the Bayview Park swim site at Concord, and more sites planned to open on the Parramatta River in the next two years, reducing sediment laden runoff was critical to improving water quality in our creeks and rivers.

“Sediment runoff can have a significant impact on our enjoyment of swim sites, foreshore parks and other green spaces,” Cr Drury said.

“While we appreciate the ongoing challenges being experienced by the building and construction industry, it is vital that builders and developers install and maintain appropriate controls on their sites to help protect our waterways.”

Get the Site Right is a joint taskforce between the Cooks River Alliance, Georges Riverkeeper, NSW Environment Protection Authority (EPA), Parramatta River Catchment Group, Sydney Coastal Councils Group, WaterNSW, Department of Planning and Environment (DPE), and local councils.



The campaign targets erosion and sediment control on building and construction sites and highlights the impact of sediment-laden runoff on our waterways.

Agencies that participated in the October 2022 campaign: Blacktown City Council, Blue Mountains, Campbelltown City Council, City of Canada Bay, City of Canterbury Bankstown, City of Parramatta, City of Ryde, Fairfield City Council, Georges River Council, Lane Cove Council, Lithgow City Council, Liverpool City Council, Northern Beaches Council, Randwick City Council, Sutherland Shire Council, Waverley Council, Willoughby City Council, Wollondilly Shire Council and Woollahra Municipal Council.

Members of the public are encouraged to report pollution incidents, including poor sediment control, to their local council or the EPA's 24/7 Environment Line on 131 555.

<sup>1</sup><https://www.abs.gov.au/statistics/economy/price-indexes-and-inflation/producer-price-indexes-australia/latest-release>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.bom.gov.au/climate/ahead/outlooks/>

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**Note to Editors:**

Images available on request.

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