

# Protecting Vegetation



**'Do it right on site' is a project to help the construction industry protect the environment and achieve the many benefits that come from doing so.**

## Protecting Vegetation What is it?

This is keeping as much of the existing grass and plants on the site as possible.

## Why is it important?

Vegetation is the best value for money surface stabiliser available on a building site because it:

- 1) protects the soil surface from rain impact;
- 2) increases the amount of rain that soaks into the ground;
- 3) reduces runoff speeds;
- 4) binds the soil; and
- 5) filters the runoff.



Show no go areas on your Soil & Water Management Plan and ensure staff are aware of them.

Display Soil & Water Management Plan on a prominent part of the site.

## What do I need to do?

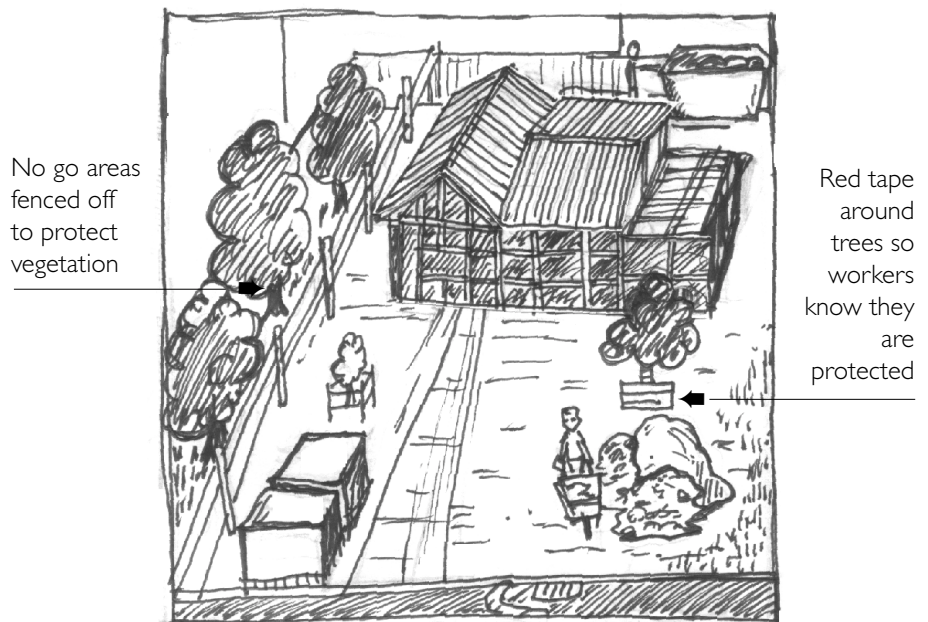
### Before building commences:

Identify vegetation on site which can be kept throughout the whole development and mark this as a 'no go' area on all work plans including the Soil and Water Management Plan. Where vegetation needs to be removed, plan to leave it in place as long as possible and stage earthworks to minimise the amount of the site cleared at any one time.

### Installing the controls:

Install the 'no go' areas by fencing off these zones. Place red tape or other bright materials around trees and plants to be kept. Ensure staff and subcontractors know not to enter. As you finish earthworks in one part of the site, revegetate it or plant temporary crops like rye to prevent erosion.

Revegetation should not be expected to provide complete erosion protection for a soil that is not stable due to its structure, texture or excessive slope. Erosion control matting should be used for revegetation areas on excessive slopes to provide interim protection until the vegetation cover can be fully established.



### Maintenance of the controls:

If the site has not been rehabilitated and is handed over to a new homeowner, the owners need to understand that they are legally responsible to ensure that pollution does not enter the stormwater system. As a general rule sediment control devices should be left in place until 70% revegetation cover has been established, or other measures installed in accordance with the council's requirements.



Builders should advise home owners of their responsibility to prevent stormwater pollution

## Remember:

Everyone has a responsibility to protect the environment. The site supervisor is required to make sure that all workers, including sub-contractors are doing the right thing and all workers are required to notify their supervisors and Council if they see pollution occurring.

It is illegal for any substance other than rainwater to enter the stormwater system. If you do have an accident and pollution occurs you are required by law to notify the Council so that they can work with you to minimise any harm to the environment.

Penalties for polluting the stormwater system range from \$750 on the spot fines to \$1 million and seven years in gaol. Both companies and individuals can be fined.

Council Officers and the EPA enforce the environmental legislation and do routine inspections of building sites. They can issue notices to make companies clean up sites, change the way they are managing the sites and if necessary, cease work. They will attempt to work with you but penalties will be issued if a satisfactory environmental outcome is not achieved.

## List of fact sheets available from Council:

1. Diversion of Upslope Water
2. Dust Control
3. Early installation of Roof Drainage
4. Excavation Pump Out
5. Protected Concrete, Brick and Tile Cutting
6. Protected Concrete Delivery
7. Protected Service Trenches
8. Protected Stockpiles
9. Protected Wash Areas
10. Protected Waste Management and Chemical Storage

### 11. Protecting Vegetation

12. Protection of Gutter and Street Stormwater Drains
13. Protection of Site Stormwater Pits
14. Sediment Controls
15. Soil and Water Management Plans
16. Stabilised Site Access

For further information on preventing pollution from building and construction sites contact your local council:

'Do it right on site' is funded by the Natural Heritage Trust and the Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils – Bankstown, Botany Bay, Canterbury, Hurstville, Kogarah, Marrickville, Randwick, Rockdale, South Sydney, Sutherland Shire, Waverley and Woollahra.

# THE DRAIN IS JUST FOR RAIN



Southern Sydney Regional Organisation of Councils