



HEALTHY WATERWAYS

A collaborative approach to improving our waterways



Population growth can cause increased pressure on waterway recreation areas.

Scientific research has shown that there are increasing threats to the health of our waterways and catchments. Major water health issues affecting South East Queensland (SEQ) include excessive levels of sediment and nutrients entering our waterways from both urban and non-urban catchments, and reduced natural flows in many waterways. Rapid population growth brings increased demands for water supply, and places increasing pressures on natural assets such as Moreton Bay and the rivers and streams feeding into it. Collaborative actions across government, industry and the community are needed to maintain waterways in good condition, and to improve already degraded areas. Whether the problems are in the urban areas, Moreton Bay, rural townships or agricultural and pastoral land, the answers require our collective effort.

The South East Queensland Healthy Waterways Partnership was established in July 2001 and is a special collaboration between government, industry, researchers and the community. These Partners work together to improve catchment management and waterway health in the eastward-draining rivers of South East Queensland (between Noosa and the Queensland-New South Wales border) and Moreton Bay.

The Partnership's Vision:

By 2026, our waterways and catchments will be healthy ecosystems supporting the livelihoods and lifestyles of people in South East Queensland, and will be managed through collaboration between community, government and industry.

The Healthy Waterways logo, with the tagline - because we're all in the same boat - reminds us all of the need to take action to protect and enhance waterways and catchments. We need to plan and work together to deliver our vision of Healthy Waterways. The SEQ Healthy Waterways Partners have developed and are implementing the South East Queensland Healthy Waterways Strategy, 2007-2012. The Strategy deals with aquatic ecosystem health and water quality issues, and contains measures by which the impacts of human activities on our waterways and catchments can be avoided or improved. The SEQ Healthy Waterways Partners have committed to over five hundred management actions contained within the Strategy's twelve Action Plans.

Collaborative programs of the SEQ Healthy Waterways Partnership includes the Ecosystem Health Monitoring Program and annual release of the Report Card for 18 major catchments, 19 estuaries, and Moreton Bay; the Water by Design program that promotes the widespread adoption of sustainable urban water management; the Healthy Country project focussing on ways to reduce sediments and nutrients entering our waterways locally and in the Bay; and the Science and Research Program which provides independent scientific advice to the Partners. However, more collaborative works are needed and planned. By working together, we can achieve the SEQ Healthy Waterways Partnership's Vision.



The Strategy aims to deliver a range of outcomes essential to maintaining and improving the health of SEQ's waterways and Moreton Bay.



WHAT CAN YOU DO?

All of us have an impact on the health of our waterways and catchments. *You can make a difference.* Listed below are some of the many effective and positive things you can do to help.

1. Learn about your local environment

- Where are the creeks and rivers in your area?
- How healthy are they?
- What are the problems?



2. Put rubbish in the correct bin

- If it is dropped on the ground then it can be washed into the stormwater drain and end up in waterways and Moreton Bay.



3. Keep excess nutrients out of our waterways

- Wash the car on the lawn rather than the street so the soapy, nutrient-rich water soaks into the grass instead of running into a stormwater drain and into a creek.
- Put the garden clippings and kitchen scraps into a covered compost bin. Never hose them down the drain.
- Wrap the dog's droppings and put them in the bin.



4. Keep sediment out of our waterways

- Protect and rehabilitate riparian areas.
- Keep exposed dirt to a minimum.
- Adopt best land management practice e.g. agricultural code of practice or erosion sediment control measures in urban areas.



5. Minimise the material going into the sewerage system

- Do not use an insinkerator – compost vegetable scraps instead.
- Do not put milk or other foodstuffs down the sink.



6. Conserve water

- Water the lawn at night or in the early morning as this reduces evaporation and water wastage.
- Grow a waterwise garden – plant species that need less water.
- Do not leave the tap running when cleaning your teeth or peeling vegetables.
- Do not hose the driveway, sweep it instead and compost the grass and leaves.



7. Treat our waterways with respect

- Take rubbish away with you – do not drop it in the creek, river or the bay.
- Do not release sewage from your boat, install a containment device.
- Reduce boat wave wash and observe speed limits.



8. Buy produce from sustainable producers

- Look for products that come from sustainable growers.
- Ask for better labelling of food stuffs so that you can make choices.



The Facts

You are directly connected to the waterways, and individual actions do make a difference to the quality of water in catchments.

All waterways are connected. Rainfall carries backyard soils and pollutants into the stormwater drain, then into the local creek and bay.

Everyone and everything, from the farms at the top of the catchment to the people and animals in the bay, rely on our most precious resource of water.

Do you know what a catchment is?

Most people are unaware that we all live in a catchment. A catchment is an area of land surrounded by natural high features such as hills or mountains. All the runoff from rainwater in this area will flow to a low point like a stream or river and eventually out to the bay.

Did you know?

Cigarette butts are a major source of pollution in our waterways.

