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## **Council urges builders to boost safety, clean up work sites**

Orange builders are being encouraged to lift the safety and tidiness of their building sites. Orange City Council is planning a blitz of worksites next week.

Orange City Council's Planning & Development Committee chair Cr Russell Turner said it's important for the safety of building site workers and the appearance of the neighbourhood, that builders take their responsibilities seriously.

"It's become clear that a large number of residential building sites around the city are not being maintained to a satisfactory standard," Cr Russell Turner said. "A poorly maintained worksite can add to the risk of accidents for employees as well as impacting on the appearance of the neighbourhood."

"Community members are telling the council they are concerned about litter from building sites. We also have to take the problem of silt in our city's stormwater harvesting system more seriously."

The council has written to all builders urging them to keep a close eye on the tidiness of their work site, ahead of a round of inspections starting next week.

"This campaign is about reminding responsible site managers and builders of their obligations to make sure construction sites are set up and maintained in line with development consent conditions and best practice," Cr Turner said.

The list of potential problems builders are responsible to maintain includes:

- Sediment controls installed and maintained, to prevent mud and silt from flowing into neighbouring properties
- Ensuring there's only one vehicle access-way to the site, with gravel in place to minimise erosion, and to prevent mud and silt from flowing onto the roadway and neighbouring properties
- Provide onsite toilet facilities
- Provide adequate waste control measures (skip bins, waste receptacles, waste cages)
- Waste/litter correctly disposed of so that litter isn't blown off the site into the neighbourhood
- Building materials stored wholly on site and not on footpaths, roads or nearby public reserves.
- Make sure signs are in place and clearly visible from the front of the site which show the certifying authority and the contact details of the major contractor
- Secure site fencing
- Appropriately parked vehicles

The letters, mailed in early November, give builders two weeks' notice that Council environmental and building inspectors will be going to building sites to check for any breaches.

Electronic message boards will be erected as a further reminder to builders to take action on their sites.

The letter also provided details of online resources and further information about sediment control and site management.

- NSW Environment Protection Authority – Construction and stormwater pollution
  - <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/resources/water/BlueBookVol1.pdf>
  - <https://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/stormwater/whatcauses.htm>

In due course, fines can be issued. Fines of up to \$8,000 may apply for each identified non-compliance. For example, a single sediment control breach has a minimum fine of \$8,000.

If problems are found, builders will be given time to bring sites up to scratch before a follow-up inspection and on-the-spot fines can be issued.

“We want to give every opportunity for the people in charge of building sites to clean them up and make sure they are safe and in line with industry best practice. But, if builders don't do the right thing, then fines are a tool in the council tool-box that will be used,” Cr Russell Turner said.

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