

# all washed up

You've just finished painting your bedroom with waterborne paint. Although you'd like to sit back and admire your handiwork, the paintbrush and roller need to be rinsed off. *Where do you do this?*

- (a) down an outside drain/stormwater drain
- (b) at an inside sink
- (c) onto the lawn

If you chose (a), you could be harming the fish, insects and plant life that live in our urban waterways. There are, for example, around 1,300 urban streams running through Auckland's backyards, let alone the rest of Australasia. All stormwater drains flow directly into these, into our lakes, or directly into the sea carrying with them any pollutants, which can drastically alter these environments.

The best place to rinse your brushes is either at an inside sink, all of which feed to the sewerage treatment plant, or onto the lawn.

**The Auckland Regional Council Water Pollution Response Team's advice to DIY'ers when carrying out activities such as painting, sanding, plastering, concreting, and even waterblasting is to:**

- > Wash out any concreting equipment, such as concrete mixers, spades, or wheelbarrows, onto the lawn, away from protected trees, making sure washings safely soak in and don't flow to an outside drain.
- > Wash out paintbrushes used in solventborne paints in a container with thinners. Allow the paint to separate from the thinners, let it harden and dispose of it in the domestic rubbish. If you need to dispose of the thinners, take it to the Hazmobile. Visit [www.hazmobile.co.nz](http://www.hazmobile.co.nz) for more information.
- > Let excess plastering waste dry and dispose of it in the rubbish bin. Wash plastering equipment on the lawn.
- > Clean up paint chips and dust from sanding and dispose of them in a rubbish bin.
- > When waterblasting roofs, block off or disconnect downpipes. Direct the washwater to a lawn or garden, or collect it and divert it to an inside drain. If you're using chemicals, always try to direct your washwater to the sewer system via an inside drain.
- > When waterblasting driveways, prevent any water entering the stormwater system by covering or sandbagging around any driveway drains and directing the washwater onto the lawn.
- > Ensure driveways are swept clean rather than washed down – every little bit helps.



For more information, phone 09 366 2000 and ask to speak to a Pollution Response Officer or visit [www.arc.govt.nz](http://www.arc.govt.nz).

To report water pollution, ring the Auckland Regional Council 24-hour water pollution hotline on 09 377 3107. Contact your local council in other areas.

To find out more about minimising the effects of decorating on the environment, visit [www.resene.co.nz/paintwise.htm](http://www.resene.co.nz/paintwise.htm).