

# About...

## Stormwater

### WHAT IS STORMWATER?

Stormwater is rainwater that falls on the ground, paving, driveways or other hard surfaces within a property.

It also includes overflows from tanks and roof guttering. This water can be captured and pumped back for use.

### WHAT CAN STORMWATER BE USED FOR?

Stormwater can only be used for:

- Toilet flushing
- Sub-surface and surface irrigation.

This is because stormwater can carry a wide range of pollutants, including sediments, oils, hydrocarbons and leaves.

As a result, stormwater must never be used for human consumption, personal washing, cleaning and cooking or mixed with water intended for such use.

### COLLECTING STORMWATER

Stormwater should be used only where it has been captured solely from the user's property, and where the property is clean, with no loose soil or chemical contamination (e.g. from petrol or diesel).

When designing a stormwater capture, a Licensed or Registered Plumbing Practitioner must consider:

- collection systems
- storage options
- treatment requirements
- distribution methods
- the eventual use for the water
- obtaining necessary approvals.

### USING STORMWATER

As with any recycled or reclaimed water, it is important to match the intended use of stormwater with the quality of the water.

### STORAGE

Where possible, stormwater should not be stored in a device that is also used to store rainwater.

However, if stormwater and rainwater are stored together, this water must only be used for low risk purposes such as garden watering and toilet flushing.

Stormwater and grey water should never be stored together. Untreated grey water should not be stored for more than 24 hours as it can turn septic.

Stormwater overflow can go back into the stormwater drainage system, while grey water overflow needs to be discharged into the sewerage system.

### TREATMENT

Stormwater should always be treated before use. The risk of collecting contaminated water should be assessed at the outset when designing the stormwater re-use system.

Generally, the more likely the water is to come into direct human contact, the more treatment and prevention is needed. Stormwater to be re-used for irrigation, for example, may need to be applied through sub-surface drippers rather than surface sprinklers.

You cannot use stormwater to irrigate food crops.

### RISK IN USING STORMWATER

Stormwater can pose the same health risks as sewage effluent.

Stormwater quality can vary dramatically depending on where the water is collected, the amount of rainfall and time between rainfall events.

In the first instance, Plumbing Practitioners should seek advice from the Environmental Protection Authority and the Department of Human Services on considerations surrounding the use of stormwater.

### SECURING A DRINKING WATER SUPPLY

A Licensed or Registered Plumbing Practitioner installing plumbing which carries stormwater must ensure stormwater cannot contaminate the drinking water supply.