



Above - Vegetation displaying damage from poisoning

Illegal Vegetation Damage - Foreshore Reserves

Council, as Trustee of Crown Lands, has a duty of care and legal responsibility under the Land Act (1994) to protect vegetation under its control for the preservation of public land for everybody's use. When individuals damage vegetation on foreshore reserves, the whole community is affected.

What are the benefits for the community in protecting vegetation along our foreshores?

There are many positives for our whole community, vegetation helps provide cooler, greener and more comfortable pathways for recreational activities like walking and cycling. The improved air quality and natural wind breaks add to our well-being.

There are also significant environmental benefits, like cleaner storm water runoff, keeping the shoreline where it should be by assisting with erosion control and weed suppression, as well as being valuable habitat for wildlife.

What happens when we ignore or allow illegal damage to vegetation along our foreshores?

The community loses the natural amenity that trees and other vegetation provide. Contaminated soil from poisoning prevents everybody from using the public open space, sometimes for years. Council are required to notify the Department of Environment and Science (DES) when a contaminated site poses a risk to public safety.

There is a direct financial burden for the community. Resources are diverted from other community needs to fix the damage.

Vital habitat for birds and other arboreal (tree dependent) wildlife is lost, along with the safe haven vegetation on the ground provides for small animals and reptiles.

What are the costs of illegal vegetation damage?

When vegetation on public land is damaged, council must try to rehabilitate the loss of vegetation. There are many costs involved, including economic, cultural, environmental and social.

Council officers have to spend time and money investigating the damage, then there's the cost of replacement of trees and shrubs, remediation of poisoned and contaminated soil, fencing off the area to protect public safety and signage production and installation.

Trees connect us to the landscape and have great cultural significance for many in our community. With climate change already causing havoc for our bushland, intentional damage to vegetation can result in permanent loss as the landscape struggles to adjust to changing growing conditions.

There's less open space for all of us to use while the damaged areas are closed off and attempts are made to rehabilitate the bushland.

If members of the public have any information which could assist with identifying those responsible for foreshore vegetation damage they can report it confidentially on 1300 79 49 29.



Healthy foreshore vegetation