



## Priority actions for water...

### Everyday things you can do

- Comply with your local water restrictions.
- Update your water fittings. Install water-saving devices like AAA-rated showerheads, dual flush toilets, tap aerators and flow controllers. A water-efficient showerhead can save around 10 litres of water a minute.
- Think about ongoing water consumption when you're buying new appliances or equipment - water-efficient dishwashers use half the water of average models. Look for the highest A-rating or star rating for dishwashers, washing machines, toilets, taps and showerheads.
- Check that pipes and taps are in good order. Promptly fix or report any leaks or drips – a leaking tap can waste 200 litres of water a day.
- Insulate hot water pipes, and, if you're installing a new system, minimise the distance between the hot water unit and the taps so you don't waste water while waiting for it to run hot.
- Turn the tap off when you clean your teeth!
- Operate the washing machine or dishwasher only when you have a full load.
- Wash fruit and vegetables and rinse dishes in a plugged sink or bowl instead of running under water.
- Reuse water from your bath, shower and laundry to water your garden. Find out about installing a grey water system.
- Only water the garden when it really needs it. Minimise evaporation by using mulch and watering in the early mornings when there is no direct sunlight. Choose native plants and grasses that require less water than exotic species. Group plants with similar watering needs together.
- Plant trees and windbreaks to give shade and reduce evaporation. Reduce lawn areas – or select varieties that require less water. Replace lawns with porous paving, pebbles or drought-tolerant ground covers.
- Wash cars, outdoor furniture or pets on the grass only on non-restricted watering days, and use a bucket rather than the hose. Don't let wash water enter the storm water system – remember the drain is just for rain.
- Find out how you can capture and store your rain water, and filter it too if necessary. Investigate installation of rainwater tanks, grey water tanks and storm water collection devices.
- Use a broom to sweep and clean outdoor surfaces rather than the hose.

### How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





# Priority actions for energy use...

## Everyday things you can do

### Switch to Green Power

- It's easy. All you have to do is contact your current electricity supplier and tell them you want to buy your electricity through an approved Green Power program. Or, you can shop around and compare prices from other suppliers.
- Green Power is produced from renewable energy sources including solar, wind, biomass and hydro generation. You can choose Green Power for all your energy, or nominate a percentage of your supply.

### Use less power, at home and at work

- Switch appliances off at the power point, instead of leaving them on 'stand-by' when you've finished using them.
- Install energy-efficient lighting, such as compact florescent bulbs, and turn lights off when you leave a room. Consider installing movement or light sensors for outdoor areas or rooms that are not always occupied. Make the most of natural light wherever possible.
- Use less hot water, and turn the hot water system off if it's not needed for an extended period of time. Water heating accounts for 30% of total household energy use and about the same proportion of an average Australian household's greenhouse gas emissions.
- Adjust your hot water thermostat – reduce the temperature to a more efficient level but don't go lower than 60°C as dangerous bacteria could form. A 5°C reduction can save up to 250 kg of greenhouse gas each year.
- Install a solar hot water system (once installed it will produce free hot water) and make energy efficiency a top priority for the booster or back up. Ask your supplier about Renewable Energy Certificates (RECs) for solar water heaters – you might be eligible for a discount on the purchase cost.
- Operate the dishwasher only when it's full and choose the most appropriate wash cycle – use economy mode where possible (lowest temperature or shortest running time) and let dishes air-dry.
- Keep the fridge in a cool, well-ventilated spot, away from the oven and the sun. Make sure the coils are clean and well ventilated. Check the fridge and freezer doors close properly and are airtight – replace the seals and adjust the door hinge if necessary. Turn off the fridge or freezer when it's not needed – leave the door slightly ajar.
- Operate the washing machine only when it's full or adjust the cycle and load for a reduced capacity. Wash using cold water – this can save 3kg of greenhouse gases per load compared to a hot wash. Air or sun-dry clothes rather than using a dryer.
- In summer, make sure you're not over cooling at home or at work – 1°C difference in temperature between indoors and outdoors adds 10% to energy costs and greenhouse emissions. Set the room temperature between 23 – 26°C.
- Add extra insulation to walls and ceilings, and keep cooler by using external shading such as eaves, awnings, shutters or trees to reduce heat gain by as much as 80%.





## Priority actions for energy use... (cont'd)

- In winter, turn down the heat when you're sleeping or away from home, and put on more clothing before adjusting a thermostat. Set the room temperature between 18 – 21°C.
- Check for air gaps and seal off draughts in doors, windows, fireplaces, air outlets, vents and skirting boards – use an appropriate draught-proofing product.
- Make energy efficiency a top priority when you're purchasing products, appliances and equipment. Do some research. Consider the ongoing running costs over the life of the item, not just the initial purchase and installation cost.

### Energy ratings

- Look for the Energy Rating Label with its easy-to-recognise star rating – the more stars the more efficient the appliance, with a six- star rating being the highest level of efficiency.
- The Energy Label has two sections, the star rating – which gives a quick comparative assessment of the model's energy efficiency, and the annual energy consumption – which provides an estimate of the annual energy use of the appliance. An improvement of one star can mean savings of around 10%.
- For products such as computers or fax machines look for the ENERGY STAR logo. ENERGY STAR is an international standard for energy-efficient electronic equipment. Products with the ENERGY STAR logo have a 'stand-by' or 'sleep' mode so energy consumption is lowered when the equipment is not in use.
- You may have an ENERGY STAR compliant product, but check to make sure the energy saving mode is switched on. It's not standard protocol for manufacturers to enable this by default.
- For more substantial purchases and installations, such as household lighting, cooling or heating systems, ask your electrician and design and trade professionals for advice. Through careful planning, design and installation you may be able to generate even greater long-term savings. Check whether building systems and plants can perform more efficiently by being fine-tuned to real demands.

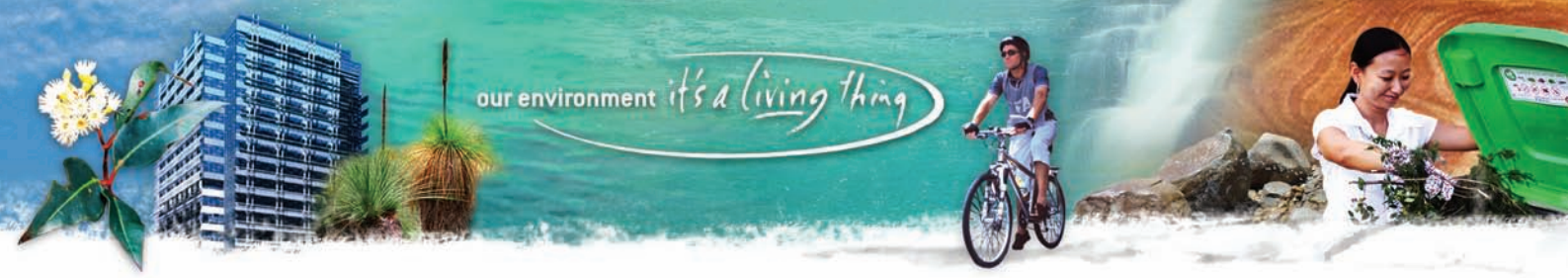
### Building and renovating

- If you're renovating or building you have a great opportunity to make your home or workplace comfortable and energy efficient.
- Make energy efficiency the top priority when you're talking to your builder, architect or tradesperson. Carefully consider sunlight, shade, natural light, room layout, ventilation and building materials. Each component has a big impact on the thermal properties and energy demands of a home or workplace.
- Good advice from energy smart designers and suppliers can save you thousands of dollars in ongoing costs, provide a more optimal solution and add long-term value to your investment.

## How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





# Priority actions for waste and recycling...

## Everyday things you can do

### Avoid generating waste in the first place

- Have a close look at your unwanted items – could any of these have been avoided by buying differently in the first place?
- Shop wisely – buy less and buy only what you need. Select products made from recycled materials and products that have minimal packaging.
- Reject plastic bags – take your own bag with you when shopping.
- Work out how you can save on paper and toner at work or in the home office. Check machine settings, print double-sided, cut down on your printouts and reuse scrap paper.
- If you're purchasing equipment, choose products that use recycled-content. For example, choose a printer that uses recycled paper and recycled toner cartridges.
- Building or renovating? Consider using second-hand or recycled building materials.
- If you make or deliver products, can you cut down on their packaging? Tell your customers about your commitment to reducing waste.

### Make sure waste is reused and recycled

- Look for ways to reuse, renovate or recycle household goods. Donate to charity, take them to your local second-hand shop, get together with your neighbours and have a garage sale, or advertise unwanted items on community noticeboards.
- Compost your food and garden waste – anything organic except meat, fish bones and animal droppings can be composted. Mulch or chip prunings for reuse in your garden. Set up a worm farm and produce your own organic fertiliser.
- Separate your recyclables and use the kerbside recycling system. Sort everything carefully and remove any contaminants.
- Look for the recyclable symbol on plastic containers and check the number – most councils collect numbers 1, 2 and 3, and some also accept 4, 5, 6 and 7. Contact your local council for more information.
- Never put plastic bags, light globes, coat hangers, broken glass, crockery, bottle lids or cigarette butts into recycling bins – the whole bin will be rejected.
- Never put chemicals in a recycling bin – they could harm people who sort these materials, contaminate the recyclable materials, or end up in landfill, which can harm the environment.
- Take used motor oils, fuels and fluids to a participating service station for recycling.





## Priority actions for waste and recycling... (cont'd)

- Take unwanted medicines to any pharmacy for free and safe disposal.
- Send ink or toner cartridges back to the supplier or manufacturer, or use a Cartridges 4 Planet Ark collection outlet. There are a number of retail outlets where you can take your cartridges including Australia Post, Harvey Norman, Tandy, Dick Smith or Officeworks.
- Recycle old mobile phones and their batteries through a retail outlet or a program such as MobileMuster.
- Donate unwanted paint to a community group or someone who can use it. Give unwanted pool chemicals to a friend or neighbour.
- Ask suppliers to take back used packaging and recycle it.
- If you don't already have one, set up a recycling program at work. Seek support from your work colleagues and keep adding to what you can reuse or recycle.
- Don't forget about recycling drink cans or bottles whenever you're out. Just because you're not at home you can still find a public recycling bin or take them home to your household recycling bins.

### **For waste you can't use or recycle – take care with disposal**

- Take unwanted household chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, hobby chemicals or poisons to a free Household Chemical Collection event in your local area. Contact your council for information about the next CleanOut day.
- Don't dump unwanted household items outside your home, in bushland or on the street. This is illegal and you'll be liable for a fine of \$750. Call your local council to discuss how to dispose of these items, and find out about council clean-up days or special collection services.
- If you're a smoker bin your butts or carry a pocket ashtray.
- Remember all streets lead to Australia's largest swimming pool – stormwater drains flow to rivers, harbours and oceans – the drain is just for rain!
- When you're out and about use public rubbish bins or take your rubbish home with you.
- Join in the next Clean up Australia Day, Business Clean Up Day or Schools' Clean Up Day. Join the hundreds of thousands of volunteers across Australia to remove rubbish.

## How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





## Priority actions for transport...

### Everyday things you can do

- Keep our air clean – leave the car at home.
- Set yourself a fuel target each week or month – if every vehicle owner in NSW drove an average of 1 kilometre less each day, we'd save up to 130 million litres of fuel each year.
- Plan your travel and route ahead of time. Choose meeting locations that allow a choice of transport modes and methods, including walking and public transport.
- Consider sharing travel for all or part of the journey. Travelling to a sporting or cultural event can be an enjoyable part of the outing – bike ride to the station to catch a train, bus or ferry to your destination.
- Using public transport means you have no parking or drink-driving worries. Walking or biking can also help you get fitter.
- Link up with others who make the same trips as you on a regular basis – parents can often share getting children to school, and team-mates and fans can share transport to sporting venues.
- Find out about recreational destinations that can be reached by public transport, and swap your next Sunday drive for a relaxing train journey or ferry trip.
- Whenever you do have to use your car, drive smart – accelerate slowly, stay within speed limits, minimise the amount of braking that is necessary and you will lessen fuel and car maintenance costs.
- Drive clean – keeping your car well-tuned means that the fuel you use burns better and pollutes less.
- Use the phone or the Internet to shop, and save time and fuel.
- Research transport options, use the Internet or phone to investigate routes and transport alternatives. The Transport InfoLine on 131 500 or [www.131500.com.au](http://www.131500.com.au) is a good place to start.

### How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





## Priority actions for chemicals use...

### Everyday things you can do

- Store chemicals safely – make sure containers are clearly labelled and out of the reach of children.
- Reduce the use of household and outdoor chemicals by buying less, and using less. Only buy what you need – enough for the job at hand.
- Look for safer alternatives. For example, find non-toxic ways of repelling pests. Use mouse or rat traps instead of baits to get rid of rodents. For pets, try less toxic treatments to help keep fleas at bay.
- Change your gardening habits – go organic to minimise the use of pesticides and herbicides.
- Use a biodegradable laundry detergent made without phosphates or petrochemicals that doesn't contain optical brighteners or enzymes. Avoid having clothing or other items dry cleaned where tetrachloroethylene is used as the primary cleaning solvent.
- Take special care if you're building or renovating. Before you buy products such as paint, solvents, varnishes, sealants or glues find out if you can buy a safer alternative instead. If you can't avoid using products that contain potentially harmful chemicals take every precaution to protect yourself and others from exposure.
- Regularly clean out the places where you store household, garden or work-based chemicals. Check how chemicals are stored for any signs of leaks or damage to containers and make sure container lids are tightly sealed.
- Make sure all chemicals are correctly labelled and are not stored beyond their recommended shelf life.
- Never mix chemicals – they could react with one another and produce toxic fumes. Always read the manufacturer's label and pay attention to any safety instructions and warnings. Follow instructions about use, storage and disposal and wear appropriate protective gear if it's recommended.
- Dispose of or recycle chemicals you don't need with great care.
- Take unwanted household chemicals, pesticides, herbicides, hobby chemicals and poisons to a free Household Chemical Collection event in your local area. Contact your council for information about the next CleanOut day.





## Priority actions for chemicals use... (cont'd)

- Donate unwanted paint to a community group or someone who can use it. Keep stored paint tins sealed properly to prevent spilling or drying out.
- Take used motor oils, fuels and fluids to a participating service station for recycling.
- Take unwanted medicines to any pharmacy for free and safe disposal.
- Give unwanted pool chemicals to a friend or neighbour – as a last option take them to a chemical collection.
- Dispose of old mobile phones and their batteries through a recycling program, such as MobileMuster.
- Never pour unwanted oils or chemicals into gutters, drains or toilets. They could end up in the stormwater system where they'd flow directly into our waterways.
- Make sure chemicals are never allowed to be absorbed into the ground – they could contaminate the soil or ground water.
- Never put chemicals in a recycling bin – they could harm people who sort these materials, contaminate the recyclable materials, or end up in landfill, which can harm the environment.
- If there is no alternative, wrap unwanted chemical containers in several layers of newspaper and seal them in a plastic bag before placing them in the garbage bin.
- Reduce the use of hazardous and dangerous materials at work. For example, choose water-based, plant-based, biodegradable and non-toxic paints, strippers, cleaners, degreasers and pest repellents wherever possible. Investigate options for recycling chemicals such as solvents.
- If you're responsible for large quantities of hazardous chemicals, make sure unwanted chemicals or a licensed contractor disposes of liquid wastes lawfully.
- Never mix different types of liquid wastes. Talk to WorkCover NSW if you need advice about handling or disposal. Report spills immediately and follow workplace procedures for clean-up.

### How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





# Priority actions for household renovating...

## Everyday things you can do

- Install energy and water efficient appliances. The more stars an appliance has, the better. A 4-star or 5-star washing machine uses around 26,000 litres a year less water than older, less efficient machines. Talk to your local council, water authority or energy supplier about possible rebates, discounts and refit programs.
- Insulate your ceiling and walls and use good quality, thicker curtains to keep warmth in in winter and heat out in summer. You won't need to use your air conditioner or heater as much and can cut your energy bill by up to \$300 each year.
- Install low flow water devices such as a dual flush toilet (reduces your water use by up to 67% per flush or up to 60 litres per day), aerating taps (reduce water use by more than 50%) and AAA-rated showerheads (reduces your water and energy bill by around \$100 per year).
- Invest in an energy efficient hot water system such as solar or a heat pump.
- You can save a lot of money on your renovations by reusing items like your bath, shower, vanity, kitchen cupboards and sinks. If you can't reuse them, you may be able to sell them through the Trading Post or eBay (rather than throw them away) or give them to a reuse business, second-hand dealer, or neighbours.
- Make sensible design decisions, such as not putting large, glass double doors on the western side of your house where they will overheat your house in summer. Good design makes a big difference to how comfortable your house is and the size of your energy bill.
- Install a rainwater tank. They come in all shapes and sizes, so are suitable for nearly every property. About 25% of a household's water is used on gardens. If you use rainwater instead, you can cut your bill by up to 25%.
- Use natural lighting to brighten your home. When renovating, get advice on the best place to put windows, make sure they aren't shaded by trees in winter and if a room is dark, install a skylight.
- Every year, lighting your house costs you about \$90 in electricity and produces 2/3 tonne of greenhouse gases when using standard light globes. By changing your light globes to energy efficient ones, you can decrease your energy bill and help protect the environment.
- You don't always have to buy new. Save money by looking for good quality, older items in the classifieds or second-hand shops.
- Use low emission paints. They are better for the environment and better for your health.

## How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





## Priority actions when camping...

### Everyday things you can do

- Locate your campsite in a designated area – or in an area that is not environmentally or culturally sensitive.
- Keep group size small, to a number that won't have a significant impact on the environment.
- Use designated fireplaces or bring a fuel or gas stove. Always obey fire bans.
- Use toilet facilities when available, or bury it at least 100m away from waterways to a depth of at least 15cm.
- Avoid using soaps, detergents and toothpaste – if you use them be sure to keep them at least 50m away from any watercourse.
- Don't feed birds and animals – it's bad for their diet and can encourage them to become dependent on humans for food. Secure all food in animal-proof containers.
- Don't tie tent ropes to trees or hang towels and clothing on them as this can ringbark and damage them.
- Remember other people may be sharing the area with you and keep noise to a minimum.
- Take all rubbish with you when you leave – even rubbish that has been left by others.
- At the end of each trip take a moment to reflect. Think about how you could lessen your 'footprint' and 'tread more softly' on your next walk.

### How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





## Priority actions when bushwalking...

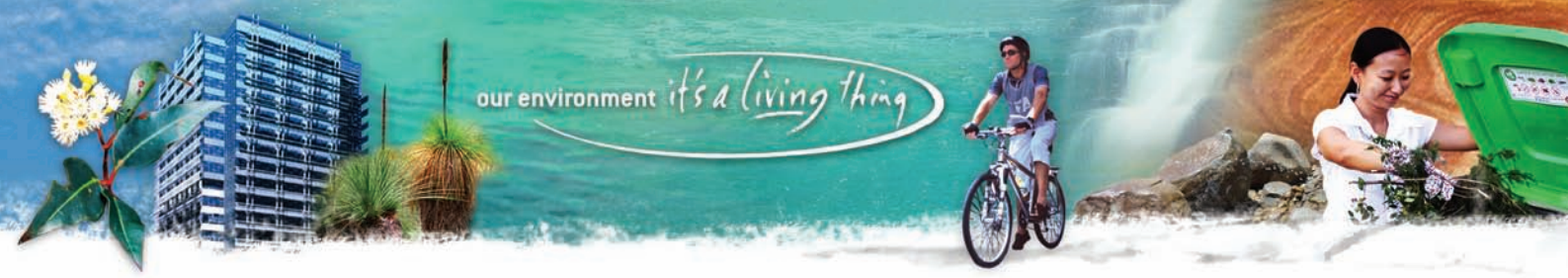
### Everyday things you can do

- Use designated fireplaces or bring a fuel or gas stove. Always comply with firebans and do not cut standing timber, alive or dead, for firewood. Do not leave fires unattended.
- Where there are no toilet facilities, bury human waste at least 100m away from watercourses at a depth of 15cm or take it home with you.
- Leave domestic pets at home. The lasting scent left by domestic pets can easily scare animals and birds away from their homes.
- Don't feed birds and animals – it's bad for their diet and can encourage them to become dependent on humans for food. Secure all food in animal-proof containers.
- Collect and stow all rubbish including unwanted food scraps. Discarded organic litter such as apple cores and citrus peel adds nutrients to the soil increasing the spread of weeds. Collect any other rubbish you see on the way – leave the bush untouched.
- Stay on the track even if it's rough or muddy. Walk on rocks and hard ground wherever possible and avoid wet areas on the track as this just widens the bog area. Do not walk on edges or cut corners on zigzagging tracks as this increases erosion and scarring.
- Choose footwear to suit the terrain and tread lightly. Lightweight walking boots or even running shoes are usually all you will need.
- Keep group sizes small to lessen the environmental impact.
- Spread out rather than follow in each other's footsteps. Tramping easily damages delicate vegetation and a plant is more likely to recover if walked on only once.
- Don't pick flowers or break branches – even if you think the wood is dead, it provides an important habitat for many insects and other animals.
- At the end of each trip reflect on the outing. Take a moment to think about how you could lessen your 'footprint' and 'tread more softly' on your next walk.

### How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





## Priority actions when boating...

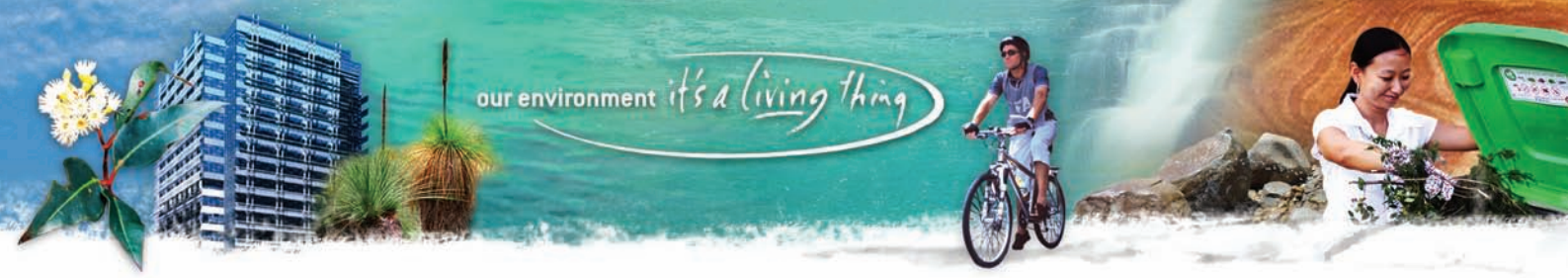
### Everyday things you can do

- Make sure your boat and its engines are in good working order – this will minimise the water, noise and air pollution that comes from your boat.
- Observe the emissions from your boat and regularly check for oil or fuel leakages.
- Install an approved onboard sewage treatment system or holding tank. On small craft this could be as simple as using a portable caravan/camping toilet. Use pump out facilities at marinas and wharfs to collect and dispose of human waste.
- Take care where you anchor, particularly around seagrass beds and other sensitive areas, as these are important marine habitats.
- Travel at speeds that avoid excessive wash. This may cause bank erosion and disturb sensitive river or seabed environments, as well as disturb or endanger others.
- Stow all loose items. Make sure everything onboard is secured to avoid anything flying overboard such as plastic bags, drink containers, wrappers, packaging and other articles.
- Keep bilges clean to prevent pollutants being discharged overboard. Use an absorbent mat in the bilge to clean up oily water and dispose of these materials appropriately.
- Understand and obey noise restrictions. They apply to both engine noise and amplified music, and the time and area in which you are boating.
- If fishing, ensure you have the appropriate licence for recreational fishing in your state. Abide by your licence conditions observing fish sizes and bag limits.
- Keep your rubbish on board and dispose of it properly ashore – this includes cigarette butts. Collect any other rubbish that you see – discarded plastics and fishing lines can injure or kill marine animals.
- Reduce your use of toxic cleaning and painting products. Use phosphate-free and environmentally friendly detergents. Dilute detergents with water before use.

### How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)





## Priority actions when recreational driving...

### Everyday things you can do

- Keep vehicles in good mechanical order to maximise safety and minimise the risk of oil leaks and fuel spills.
- Check that grass and twigs can't easily catch in your muffler mountings – they could catch alight and start a fire.
- Keep tyres and undercarriage free from weeds or other environmental contaminants.
- Keep the number of vehicles in a touring group at a level, which maximises quality experience and minimises social impacts on others in the vicinity.
- Stay on designated roads and vehicle tracks – don't drive on walking tracks or trample fragile bush.
- Drive in the middle of tracks to minimise track widening and damage to soft edges.
- Drive at speeds appropriate to the conditions – keep a lookout for wildlife and other visitors, and minimise noise and track damage.
- Avoid dazzling wildlife with high beam, spotlights or powerful driving lights.
- Wherever possible do not drive on vegetation, particularly in grassy and soft areas.
- Minimise horn and light use, gear-crunching, revving and excessive idling.
- Ford creeks only at designated crossings and approach at 90 degrees to avoid damaging the bank.

### How can I find out more?

Visit [www.livingthing.net.au](http://www.livingthing.net.au)