

RIVER HEALTH

There are two ways that material can enter the river. They are:

- Diffuse discharge – meaning that the material can enter the river over a wide area, for instance run-off from a paddock; and
- Point source discharge – meaning the discharge at a particular location, for instance a discharge from a pipe.

The Health of the river is influenced by material that enters the river.

Diffuse discharges to the river are from:

- Erosion and slips;
- Farming practises such as stream bank grazing, and stream crossing by animals;
- Run-off of rainfall across ground which may pick up fertiliser, animal waste and sediment.

Diffuse discharges typically occur from land around townships. They may contain the following contaminants which may affect river health.

- Sediment;
- Organic solids (BOD);
- Bacteria and other microorganisms; and
- Nutrients.

Point source discharges that occur into rivers are mainly from:

- Industry;
- Town stormwater;
- Treated municipal wastewater; and
- Wastewater overflows.

Point source discharges tend to be collected from a larger area and so are more concentrated than diffuse discharges. Some of the contaminants in point source discharges which can affect the river are:

- Stormwater may contain hydrocarbons, sediment, bacteria, metals and metalloids and nutrients;
- Municipal wastewater may contain organic solids (BOD), sediment, bacteria and other organisms, organic compounds from households and nutrients; and
- Industrial wastewater may contain washing chemicals, processing chemicals, liquid animal wastes, organic solids (BOD), sediment, bacteria and other organisms, and nutrients.

