

# Good hygiene

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## Good hygiene and your project

It is your responsibility to ensure that your activities do not contribute to the spread of weeds, pest animals and disease, particularly *Phytophthora dieback* in south-west WA.

Good hygiene applies to everyone working on plants, farms, forests or gardens and simple measures can protect the environment, and your backyard, from pests and disease.

### Keep it clean

Washing your hands with soapy water before and after handling plants and seeds is one of the easiest biosecurity measures you can take.

This is particularly important if you are dealing with plant material or soil that you suspect could be contaminated by a pest, disease or weed seeds.

Keeping equipment clean is also important. Do not use equipment without ensuring it is clean and free of soil, seeds and other contaminants.

The equipment that you use should be clean and disinfected before using it on a different patch of land or waterway. Remember that you need to thoroughly clean an item before it will be satisfactorily disinfected.

### Visitors

Managing the movement of visitors is one way of preventing pests, disease and weeds spreading on your project.



*Image courtesy Department of Agriculture and Food*

Some diseases can be very easily spread from one area to another on people's clothing, in their hair and on vehicles.

Shoes pose a major risk as they can carry dirt containing weed seeds and other plant material.

*Phytophthora dieback*, affecting WA's south west, lives in soil and is most commonly spread by human activities that move contaminated soil and plant material.

Have a designated area for visitor parking which is well away from your project.



### Know what to look for

Check the origin of material coming on or going off your project to assess it for the risk of disease or insects. This includes material from commercial nurseries and other sources.

### Report it

The early detection and containment of a weed, pest or disease is essential to prevent its spread.

Report the suspect weed, pest or disease to [WA's Pest and Disease Information Service](#) on 1800 084 881 to report the location. If possible take a photograph and email it to [enquiries@agric.wa.gov.au](mailto:enquiries@agric.wa.gov.au).

Arrive Clean, Leave Clean: these guidelines detail how to prevent the spread of invasive plant diseases and weeds threatening our native plants, animals and ecosystems.

### Phytophthora dieback

Phytophthora dieback is a devastating plant disease caused by a group of microscopic soil-borne water moulds called Phytophthora. The most common and widespread in the south-west of Australia is the introduced species *Phytophthora cinnamoni*.

Western Australia's south-west provides ideal conditions and highly susceptible flora for this disease which has spread to rural and urban bushland, from Eneabba to Esperance.

Phytophthora lives in soil and is most commonly spread by human activities that move contaminated soil and plant material. Once it is present in an area, the disease spreads root-to-root between host plants and through drainage across catchments.

### Your role in stopping the spread

It is your responsibility to ensure that your activities do not contribute to the spread of Phytophthora dieback.

If there is a risk that your project may spread Phytophthora dieback, you must have the site mapped by a registered dieback interpreter and develop a hygiene management plan to ensure you don't accidentally spread this disease.

### Myrtle rust in Western Australia

Myrtle rust, caused by the fungus *Uredo rangelii*, is a serious disease that attacks and kills many plants belonging to the Myrtaceae family including eucalypts, bottlebrushes, paperbarks and peppermint trees.

Discovered in April 2010 in a New South Wales nursery, it is now widespread throughout NSW, Victoria and Queensland. It is now present in commercial nurseries, public landscapes and state forests.

It is important to prevent myrtle rust from entering Western Australia. Bush walkers and home gardeners are likely to be the first people to find myrtle rust if it enters WA.

### Contact

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