

## STAIN REMOVAL USING OXALIC ACID

Sometimes the clean, fresh water from the water pipe that supplies your home or business may be interrupted due to a planned maintenance shutdown, unplanned break in the pipeline or use of a fire hydrant.

As a result, a combination of iron and manganese in the pipes may be dislodged, causing a temporary brown discolouration of the water. While aesthetically this discolouration is unsightly, it presents no immediate health risks.

This 'dirty' water can stain washing if it enters into an active washing machine. However, a solution of oxalic acid can be successful in removing iron and manganese stains from clothing. It is available from businesses such as Bunnings or Mitre 10, generally in 500g packs, at a cost of around \$18.00.

If you have experienced the staining of laundry items during an event as discussed above, you should:

- Ensure that your water supply is clear prior to using oxalic acid
- Keep stained washing wet/damp
- Add 75g of oxalic acid per litre of warm, clear water
- This should be done in a large plastic bucket (**NOT** metal)
- The stained clothing should be soaked in this solution for approximately five minutes
- If a large quantity is stained it may be better to soak several smaller loads in succession so the solution is brought into contact with all parts of the affected clothing
- Once the stains have been dissolved the clothing should be rinsed thoroughly in clear, cold water. The washing solution can be discarded by flushing down a toilet or sink in your home. It must never be put down an outside drain.

**NOTE:** Oxalic acid cannot be used as a measure to prevent the washing from being stained and therefore should never be added to the washing machine.

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## Warning

Correct usage and handling of this product should not result in any problems or health issues. While the acid is not corrosive like other acids, it is poisonous if swallowed. Consequently, should any spillage or splashing occur, ensure that it is wiped up immediately.

The oxalic acid must be kept out of reach of children. As an extra precaution, children should be kept out of the laundry while the cleaning operation is carried out. In the event of poisoning or suspected poisoning, immediately implement the first aid treatment outlined on the packaging.

Any Material Safety Data Sheet that may be provided by suppliers should be read and understood.

Nelson City Council accepts no liability or responsibility for an injury or damage associated with the use of this product.

For further information contact Nelson City Council:

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