

St Kilda Pier

Inner landing dredging



FAQ Sheet: May 2025

Frequently asked questions

Maintenance dredging is conducted at St Kilda Pier as part of Parks Victoria's program to ensure safe boating access at key sites within Port Phillip and Western Port.

Why does Parks Victoria dredge at St Kilda?

As the local port and waterway manager for Port Phillip and Western Port, Parks Victoria is responsible for providing safe access to local port facilities. Over time sand naturally fills in boating access channels like those at the inner landing. Dredging is required to maintain safe access to the channels, and other local port facilities like boat ramps, piers/jetties and harbours. Dredging has been occurring at this site for more than 20 years.

How often does dredging occur?

The decision to undertake dredging is determined by the design depth of the area and minimum depth triggers. Parks Victoria regularly monitors water depths at St Kilda to determine when dredging is required. Dredging may occur anytime of the year to ensure safe access for vessels in response to sedimentation cycles.

Where is the dredged material deposited?

The dredged sand is distributed in predetermined areas along the beach adjacent to Catani Gardens, between the rock groyne and the Bay Road drain, where it can benefit the beach profile. The natural direction of coastal sand movement is considered when establishing a delivery site for the dredged material. The sand will renourish the beach and replace what has been eroded.

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Is the dredged material contaminated?

No. The dredged material is local sand that has washed into the access channel from the adjoining beaches as part of the local coastal processes. Parks Victoria completes testing at all of its sites requiring maintenance dredging and follows the testing and environmental requirements outlined in the EPA Best Practice Guidelines for Dredging, and other relevant regulatory standards. The quality of water will not be affected during dredging, but it may appear turbid (cloudy) until the sand settles. This is similar to the turbidity experienced when strong wave action stirs up sand and sediments during storms

Why does the sand deposited on the beach sometimes have a dark colour and smell?

The sand is deposited onto a beach with a lot of water which helps with its transport. Wet sand is darker than dry sand, regardless of its natural colour. Also, sand usually contains decaying aquatic plant material, such as seaweed, which sometimes gives the dredged sand a grey appearance and a mild odour. These characteristics quickly change once it has been exposed to air, sun light and tidal processes. Usually, within a week the sand is the same colour as the rest of the beach and the smell is gone.



Above: Excavator moving piped dredged sand and slurry

What are the pipes for?

The pipes are used to transfer a slurry of sand and water from the dredge to the disposal site. As the sand and water flows out onto the site, the sand settles and slowly accumulates as it builds up the beach. Additional pipes are gradually attached in order to progress along the beach or deliver the sand to a specific location.

Can I still use the beach?

Yes, unless otherwise marked onsite. Sections of beach will be closed to the public during the dredging works for safety reasons. Once the dredging pipeline is in place, the beach will be reopened to the public, excluding an area at the disposal site. The disposal site is where the water and sand come out of the end of the pipe and will be gradually extended along the beach until dredging is complete. All temporary beach closures will be clearly marked. For safety reasons, visitors should keep away from the outfall pipe and any machinery operating in the area. The site will be supervised during this time.

Can I still use the pier?

Yes, unless otherwise marked onsite. Access to the inner landing may be temporarily restricted to ensure safe operation of the dredging equipment when working under and near the landing.

Can I still use my boat in the harbour during the dredging?

Yes, the harbour and navigation channels will remain open during the dredging. Mariners must always proceed with caution around a dredge and be aware of floating or submerged pipelines. When encountering a dredge, vessel operators should always pass on the non-obstruction side of the dredge vessel. The safe side of passage is indicated by a double black diamond day shape on the vessel. A double black ball day shape indicates the obstruction side to avoid. A third, black ball - black diamond - black ball day shape indicates the vessel is restricted in its maneuverability.

How long will the dredging take?

The entire process is expected to take up to three weeks, depending on weather.

Further information

If you have any further questions please contact the Parks Victoria information centre on 13 1963, or email the Parks Victoria maintenance dredging team at info@parks.vic.gov.au.