

PREVENTING POLLUTION FROM CONCRETING OPERATIONS

Concrete run-off from concreting operations has the potential to cause pollution if allowed to enter the stormwater system. Appropriate steps must be taken to control concrete run-off. Ensure you handle, store and dispose of concrete correctly to prevent it polluting the stormwater system.

Concrete run-off blocks stormwater drains, pollutes our creeks, lakes and rivers and has a major impact on water quality, aquatic plants and animals.

WHO IS RESPONSIBLE?

It is the responsibility of the **builder/site manager** to ensure that sediment control measures, including a designated wash-down area, are in place before work starts and are adequately maintained throughout construction. The builder/site manager must ensure all workers on the site are aware of their responsibilities to minimise pollution.

The **concrete provider** has responsibility to ensure appropriate training has been provided to their agitator truck drivers, and must provide appropriate details and resources to enable them to complete a delivery without causing pollution.



The **agitator truck driver** has responsibility to deliver concrete to a site and then return to the batch plant without causing environmental harm through spillage or leakage of concrete. The driver should inspect and maintain the truck at all times. The driver should raise any concerns about the pollution controls on site with the builder/site manager. The driver must also ensure sediment is not tracked off site. If this occurs, it must be swept up and put back on site.

The concrete pumping contractor has a responsibility to ensure that all staff and/or subcontractors act in ways that do not cause environmental harm through spillage or leakage of concrete.

CONCRETE DELIVERY

Drivers should have knowledge of the Concrete Safe Site Delivery Guidelines. The guidelines are available from Cement Concrete & Aggregates Australia at www.concrete.net.au under 'A-Z Directory'

Where possible, ensure the delivery of concrete occurs within the site, where the risk of spillage contaminating the stormwater system is minimised.

If site access is restricted and the delivery of concrete must occur on the street, appropriate sediment controls must be in place before pouring begins.

The builder/site manager must ensure that all appropriate sediment controls are in place before the concrete pour starts.

Sweep up any spillage that has occurred during the delivery procedure before removing the sediment controls. Do not hose concrete spillage into the stormwater system.

Chutes, barrels, wheelbarrows and other equipment must be rinsed in the site wash-down area. To minimise the amount of wash-down water generated, scrape excess concrete off equipment before it is washed. Do not allow equipment wash-down water to flow into the stormwater system.

Vehicles should be fitted with a drum that can be used to transport excess concrete back to their depot.

- > Wash the chute contents into the drum and seal it with a lid before leaving the site.
- > Secure the drum onto the main frame of the vehicle ready for transportation. The drum should be secured with a bracket that is easily accessible to the operator.

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- > Remove the drum from the bracket and empty the wastewater into the designated treatment facility once the truck returns to the yard. The wastewater containing suspended solids can often be recycled back into the plant.
- > Replace the drum on the truck ready for the next job.
- > Wash down the vehicles at the depot.

Alternatively, ensure that concrete washed from trucks and mixer units on site is contained and does not leave the site or enter the stormwater system.

- > Collect wash water from concrete mixers in a wheelbarrow and get rid of it in your wash area.
- > You can also safely get rid of concrete slurry by tipping small amounts in a ditch lined with plastic or geotextile liners. When the water evaporates or soaks into the surface, the solids can be recycled in construction, used as road base or disposed of to landfill.



Chutes, barrels, wheelbarrows and other equipment must be rinsed in the site wash-down area.

Mud, soil and stones carried off site are regarded as pollutants. Use a shovel to remove mud from truck tyres before leaving the site.

Inspect roads for any sediment that has been tracked off site and sweep it back on site. This should be done if there is threat of rain and at the end of each day. Do not use a hose to wash it away.

Never allow contaminated run-off water to enter a stormwater drain or watercourse.

NOISE

Ensure all building work that generates noise is conducted within the time periods detailed in the *Environment Protection Act 1997*.

Building work details	Monday to Saturday	Sunday and Public Holidays
Industrial, city and town centre areas	6am to 8pm	6am to 8pm
Any other area when work is completed within two weeks	7am to 8pm	8am to 8pm
Any other area when work is not completed within two weeks	7am to 6pm	Building work not to exceed Noise Standard*

*For more information about noise standards refer to Schedule 2 of the *Environment Protection Regulation 2005*.

LEGAL REQUIREMENTS

Under the *Environment Protection Act 1997*, it is an offence for a person to allow contaminated water to enter the stormwater system. Penalties can range from \$100 on-the-spot fines to court fines of up to \$50,000, six months in jail and a criminal record.

In the case of excessive noise a complaint may be lodged with the Environment Protection Authority (EPA). A complaint about noise pollution will be considered by the EPA only if it is made by a person affected by the noise. The EPA will investigate and may issue a warning letter, on-the-spot fine or, depending on the circumstances, an Environment Protection Order (EPO). A breach of an EPO is a serious offence and could lead to prosecution in court.

If a pollution incident does occur, you must report the incident to the EPA immediately by calling Access Canberra on 13 22 81.

Go to www.accesscanberra.act.gov.au for other information relating to your industry

Further Information | Phone: Access Canberra on 13 22 81 | Email: environment.protection@act.gov.au | Web: www.act.gov.au/accesscbr

Note: This guidance material has been prepared using the best information available to Access Canberra. Any information about legislative obligations or responsibilities included in this material is only applicable to the circumstances described in the material. You should always check the legislation referred to in this material and make your own judgement about what action you may need to take to ensure you have complied with the law. Accordingly, Access Canberra extends no warranties as to the suitability of the information for your specific situation.