Grand Island Stormwater

Guidance: Washout of Concrete, Paint, Oils, etc.

Why BMPs are needed for washout management

While hardened concrete and stucco are generally harmless, the water used to remove wet concrete has a dangerously high pH (similar to Drano liquid drain cleaner), lots of sediment, and heavy metals. The same is true for water used to clean off tools and equipment used for concrete and stucco work. Containing this wash water prevents damage to the soils onsite, existing pipes and infrastructure, vegetation and animals in nearby waterways, and groundwater. Providing containment also serves to keep your work site clean. This guidance applies to many other common hazardous materials used on work sites including curing compounds, form release oils, mortar, grout, paint, and sealants.

Best management practices

Many ready mix trucks are equipped with the ability to contain and reuse wash water and solids. Prefabricated washout containers are available for rent or purchase. Washout areas can be built on any site with hay bales and plastic or even a kiddie pool and plastic.

Washout facilities should be built in a way that contains all wash water on site and prevents the liquid from reaching the ground.

Washouts should:

- be lined and large/deep enough to prevent overflow
- have covers to keep rain out
- have a prominent sign
- be located
    - close to the pouring or mixing activity so they are easily accessible
    - where any spills or overflows will not reach inlets or surface water
- be inspected regularly – watch for leaks, damage, and signs of overflow
- be cleaned out frequently

Washouts are to be utilized by all trades on site, not just concrete.

Disposal Methods

Washouts are intended to allow the liquid portion to evaporate safely; the solids can be removed and reused in future paving projects or disposed of properly at the landfill. If the washout is too full and the liquid portion must be removed, use a vacuum to collect the water and place it in a separate lined container so it can evaporate or soak it up with a drying material and dispose of the materials properly. In the event of a spill: contain the spilled material, recover the spill, contaminated dirt, and any clean up materials, dispose of all hazardous materials properly. If a spill reaches waterways, report the spill to your local emergency and regulatory agencies.

Note: the waste concrete at the end of a load can be left on the ground and allowed to harden in place, however, it *must* be removed and disposed of with other construction materials.