



Stormwater Management

for Auto Dismantlers

EPA 492/03

Why do auto dismantlers need this information?

This information for owners and staff of auto dismantling premises aims to increase your stormwater management awareness and strengthen your knowledge. It will help you manage potential stormwater pollution problems at your auto dismantling yard.

What is stormwater?

Stormwater is rainwater that flows across outside surfaces into stormwater drains and gutters in the street. The water is not treated and flows directly to our creeks, rivers, groundwaters and oceans. Stormwater should only contain clean rainwater, and *no* pollutants such as general rubbish, industrial waste, heavy metals, oils and greases.

Benefits for you and your business

By addressing potential stormwater pollution problems at your workplace, you:

- minimise your potential for environmental fines and prosecutions
- demonstrate compliance with the Environment Protection Authority's codes of practice
- improve your businesses profile
- make long-term cost savings by increasing efficiency and reducing costs
- increase customer patronage
- improve environmental conditions for everyone.

What legislation governs stormwater pollution?

The stormwater system is protected by a number of different laws including the *Environment Protection Act 1993*, the *Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003* (the Water Quality Policy), the *Local Government Act 1934*, the *Development Act 1993* and the *Public and Environmental Health Act 1987*.

The new Water Quality Policy offers the most specific protection for the State's waters. It prohibits pollution of the stormwater system and our natural waters. The Policy has general obligations which every person, business and industry must comply with as well as specific obligations for particular activities. Failure to comply with any of these obligations may result in the issuing of a \$300 fine, Environment Protection Order, and/or prosecution.

Clause 17 of the Water Quality Policy states that a person must not discharge or deposit a pollutant listed in Schedule 4 of the Policy into any waters or onto land where it might enter any waters. The pollutants listed in Schedule 4 which relate to auto dismantlers include: cleaning agents; detergents and their by-products; engine coolant; fuel dispensing area washwater; hard waste (e.g. vehicles, tyres, batteries, metal parts, piping); motor vehicle servicing or repair waste; oil, grease, lubricants and petroleum products; rubbish; and solvents.

For more information on the Water Quality Policy visit the EPA web site at www.epa.sa.gov.au, or telephone (08) 8204 2004.

What can you do to stop stormwater pollution?

Many activities of auto dismantlers can pollute stormwater.

The first step is to always ensure that stormwater does not get contaminated. Think about all your work practices and ensure that none lead to contamination of water that will run out into stormwater drains. Think about the uncovered areas of your workplace—when it rains will the rainwater become contaminated before it gets to the stormwater drain?

Any discharges to the sewer must be in accordance with the requirements of the SA Water Trade Waste section—telephone (08) 8207 1350, fax (08) 8207 1361.

Preventing stormwater pollution

Cleaning your work area

- Prevent any washing water from entering stormwater drains. Detergents usually contain phosphates which, when transported through the stormwater system, cause problems in our waterways such as excess algal growth, toxic algal blooms and reduced oxygen levels for aquatic organisms. Confine your washing and cleaning to a contained or bunded area (raised edge) where the wastewater is directed to the sewer.
- Using biodegradable phosphate detergents is only of benefit to the environment if detergent wastewater is directed to the sewage system and the treated effluent is re-used to grow plants. Wash vehicles and parts only in an approved wash bay. (Discuss alternatives with the Trades Wastes Section of SA Water, who will provide you with technical advice and options for appropriately collecting, storing and disposing of liquid wastes.)
- Do not hose the work floor or forecourt unless all water is collected and directed through an approved trade waste system. Try sweeping or vacuuming the area—use absorbent materials to remove most grime and use solvent on a rag to remove the rest. Many workshops paint the floor with a non-slip paint (as used in aeroplane hangars) to prevent it from absorbing oil and making the floor easier to clean.
- Keep your premises clean to stop unintentional pollution of the stormwater system. Your customers and staff will also appreciate a clean and tidy work area.

Degreasing parts and vehicles

- Do all dismantling where liquids might be present on a bunded, sealed work floor.
- Drain all waste liquids, such as oil and coolants, into trays and then pour them into storage containers. Doing this thoroughly and immediately reduces the handling of waste liquids and eliminates the danger of injuries from chemicals on the floor. Never allow waste liquid to drain or spill onto the floor.

Degreasing engines and parts

- You can degrease engines in the workshop if you have a wash bay approved by SA Water. Do not degrease engines outside the workshop, or where any runoff can enter the soil or stormwater

system. Biodegradable products are allowed in the sewer but not in the stormwater system. An alternative method of degreasing is to wipe parts with rags.

- Replace your solvent-based degreasing machinery with aqueous washer units. These use biodegradable soap (allowed in the sewer system), cost less to run and are less labour intensive. (Ask your supplier about the advantages and disadvantages of both aqueous and solvent-based systems.)

Degreasing hands

- Degrease your hands over a sink that is connected to the sewer. Do not degrease them where the water can run into the gutter or a stormwater drain. Where there is no sewer, pour the wastewater into a large drum for disposal by a licensed waste contractor.

Storage of contaminated parts

- Store any contaminated parts (e.g. radiator and engine parts) inside or in a covered, sealed and bunded area (even if they have been drained). It is essential to prevent residual oil from leaking into places where they could be washed into the stormwater drain.

Water use

Water is one of our most valuable natural resources. As South Australia is the driest state in the driest developed continent, we each have a role to play in conserving this valuable resource. Stormwater can be collected and used in place of mains water for many purposes within the workplace.

Water supply organisations in South Australia have begun to implement a 'user pays' system to promote water conservation and to better reflect the true cost of water collection, storage and supply services.

Auto dismantlers can save money and have a positive impact on the environment by implementing a water efficiency program, starting with a water audit which will determine how much water your business uses, where there are water leaks, and what systems and equipment could be put in place to reduce your water use.

For information on water restrictions visit the SA Water web site at www.sawater.com.au, or telephone 1800 130 952.

The information in this document is from a series of fact sheets developed by the Stormwater Pollution Prevention Projects. Visit www.catchments.net/initiatives/initiatives_stormwater.shtml for more information on stormwater issues.

FURTHER INFORMATION

Legislation

Legislation may be viewed on the Internet at: www.parliament.sa.gov.au/dbsearch.legsearch.htm

Copies of legislation are available for purchase from:

Government Information Centre

Telephone:

13 23 24

Internet:

www.info.sa.gov.au

For general information please contact:

Environment Protection Authority

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(08) 8204 2004

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