



Stormwater Management

for Crash Repairers

EPA 496/03

Why do crash repairers need this information?

This information for owners and staff of crash repair workshops will increase your stormwater management awareness and strengthen your knowledge. It will help you to manage potential stormwater pollution problems associated with your crash repair workshop.

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 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 the 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 crash repairers include: 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 crash repairers 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 Wastes 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 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. To discuss alternatives contact 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 of 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.)

- 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.

Runoff from surface preparation

- Clean and prepare all surfaces on a concrete-paved area that is covered and bunded to exclude any stormwater. Prevent dust escaping from this area by enclosing surface preparation areas or by using vacuum systems. The dust contains toxic heavy metals and other toxic substances, and at the very least will annoy neighbours. Use a wet cloth or sponge and a bucket to minimise it.
- Contaminated water from wet sanding or rubbing down must not enter the stormwater drains. You have three options for disposing of this water:
 - Direct it to the sewer, but only if you have a trade waste permit from SA Water (call 8207 1350).
 - Collect it and reuse it. You will need something to pump it back into the system. The low water use means low costs, and disposal is only occasional.
 - Send it to a licensed waste treatment facility.

Wash bays

- Wash vehicles and parts only in an approved wash bay. Ask your local council for approval to install a wash bay.
- Enclose wash bays on three sides to prevent splash contamination of the surrounds. Place a speed hump at the entrance to prevent water from escaping, roof the wash bay to prevent rain entering and pave the floor with concrete.
- Wash bays must be connected either to the sewer through an approved trade waste system, or to an underground storage tank that is emptied by a licensed contractor. The wastewater must not drain to the stormwater system. Clean the wash bay regularly to prevent oil build-up.
- Use quick-break degreasing compounds and detergents to reduce the emulsification of oils and other hydrocarbons.
- Portable systems for the treatment of wastewater before discharge are available. Check in the Yellow Pages under 'Water Treatment & Equipment'.

Storage of contaminated parts

- Store any contaminated parts like used oil filters, old batteries, and waste oil 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 is a valuable resource and can be collected and used in place of mains water for many purposes within the workplace.

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

Crash repair shops 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 further information, please contact SA Water on (08) 8207 1350.

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

The information in this document is taken 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:

Information SA	Telephone:	13 23 24
	Internet:	www.info.sa.gov.au

For general information please contact:

Information Officer	Telephone:	(08) 8204 2004
Environment Protection Authority	Facsimile:	(08) 8204 9393
GPO Box 2607	Freecall (country):	1800 623 445
Adelaide SA 5001	Internet:	www.epa.sa.gov.au