



Stormwater Management for Mortuaries

EPA 520/04—April 2004

Why do I need this information?

This information for owners and staff of the mortuary industry aims to help you identify and manage potential stormwater pollution problems at your workplaces.

The people and places that may need to read this guideline include:

- funeral parlours
- morgues
- bereavement centres
- coroner's laboratories
- medical schools.

The *Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003* requires you to undertake activities in a way that ensures stormwater is protected from pollutants such as fleshing, hair, formaldehyde and disinfectants.

What is stormwater?

Stormwater is rainwater that flows over outside surfaces into gutters and stormwater drains in the street. This water is not treated and flows directly to our creeks, rivers, groundwaters and oceans. Stormwater should only contain clean rainwater and *no* pollutants.

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 business 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 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 Water Quality Policy has general obligations with which every person, business and industry must comply, as well as specific obligations for particular activities. Failure to comply with any of these obligations may result in 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 that relate to mortuaries include:

- chemicals
- cleaning agents
- detergents and their by-products
- rubbish
- 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 prevent stormwater pollution?

- Only wastewater meeting SA Water's acceptance standards is allowed to be discharged to the sewer.
- Autopsy tables are to have screens fitted at the drainage outlet to collect hair and solids. Collected solids are to be disposed of in an infectious-waste bin.
- Washwater and process liquors from embalming and washing of body trays are to be discharged in a 'slops trough' or an 'in-floor flushing ring' waste trap.
- Wastewater, process solutions and chemicals not permitted to be discharged to the sewer are to be stored in approved containers or tanks.

Bunding

- All tanks and containers of wastewaters, process solutions and chemical solutions are to be banded.

The information contained 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
Lands Titles Office, 101 Grenfell Street
Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: 13 23 24
Internet: shop.service.sa.gov.au

For general information please contact:

Environment Protection Authority
GPO Box 2607
Adelaide SA 5001
E-mail: epainfo@epa.sa.gov.au

Telephone: (08) 8204 2004
Facsimile: (08) 8204 9393
Freecall (country): 1800 623 445
Internet: www.epa.sa.gov.au
