



Stormwater Management

for Transport Companies

EPA 503/03

Why do transport companies need this information?

This information for owners and staff of transport companies aims to increase your stormwater management awareness and strengthen your knowledge. It will help you to manage potential stormwater pollution problems at your workplace.

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 is stormwater?

Stormwater is rainwater that flows across outside surfaces into stormwater drains and gutters in the street. The water that goes into the stormwater drains is not treated and flows directly to our creeks, rivers, groundwaters and oceans. Stormwater should only contain clean rainwater, *not* pollutants such as general rubbish, industrial waste, heavy metals, oils and greases.

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 transport companies 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, or lubricants; petroleum products; rubbish; solvents; and washdown water from cleaning vehicles, plant or equipment. For more information on the Water Quality Policy visit the EPA web site at www.epa.sa.gov.au, or telephone (08) 8204 2004.

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.

What can you do to stop stormwater pollution?

Many activities of transport companies 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?

Some examples to prevent stormwater pollution

- Minimise dust generation and sediment drag-out by surfacing your worksite, especially driveways, turning areas and entry and exit points. Restrict vehicle movements to surfaced areas. Investigate the options of various surfacing materials, such as gravel, bitumen and concrete. Too much soil is entering our wetlands, rivers and oceans, smothering plants and animals.
- Remember that more impervious surfaces (such as bitumen and concrete) have greater stormwater runoff. Consider, therefore, slopes and grades and the capture of contaminated stormwater. Surfacing will not only minimise your company's environmental impact but it will enhance your staff's comfort in the workplace, and decrease the transport of dirt and dust into offices and in doing so protect valuable equipment and machinery such as computers and faxes from requiring expensive repairs.
- 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 algal blooms and reduced oxygen levels for aquatic organisms. Confine your washing and cleaning to a contained or bunded (raised edge) area where the wastewater is directed to sewer. If this is not practical ensure that washwater is directed to grassed or landscaped areas.
- 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 your liquid wastes.
- Consider your fleet maintenance procedures. Avoid degreasing engines or parts outside the workshop or where any runoff can enter the soil or stormwater drains. You can degrease engines inside if you have an approved trade waste wash bay or other approved means of storing or treating wastewater. Degrease your hands over a sink connected to the sewer, not where the water can run off to stormwater.
- 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.

- Store any contaminated parts like used oil filters in a covered and sealed area (even if they have been drained). This will help to prevent residual oil from leaking into places where it could be washed into the stormwater drain.
- Contain and store drained coolant for disposal by an approved waste contractor. Alternatively, purchase a coolant disposal unit which concentrates the heavy metal contaminants into a stable sludge and the remaining fluid can be discharged to the sewer. The reacted chemicals are then collected and disposed of to an approved waste contractor. Radiators and blocks should be reverse flushed in a bunded cleaning area.

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.

A transport company 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 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	Telephone:	(08) 8204 2004
GPO Box 2607	Facsimile:	(08) 8204 9393
Adelaide SA 5001	Freecall (country):	1800 623 445
	Internet:	www.epa.sa.gov.au