

MANAGING CONCRETE WASHOUT IT'S REQUIRED!

Concrete Waste Concerns, Why Does It Matter?



The residue and contaminants from washing concrete trucks, pumps, mixers, chutes, hand tools, and wheelbarrows is called “concrete washout”. Products like grout, mortar and stucco and activities such as saw cutting, coring, grinding and grooving can also result in concrete washout.

This type of waste is highly alkaline, contains high levels of chromium, and is caustic and corrosive. When not managed properly it can pollute surface water and groundwater by changing its pH, increasing the toxicity of other substances, and reducing water clarity. Each of these changes is detrimental to aquatic life and their habitats.

Concrete washout that is dumped on the ground and absorbed into the soil can substantially alter the soil and inhibit future plant growth.

Management Tips

- Train employees and subcontractors so they do not dump concrete washout on the ground or allow it to enter storm drains, open ditches, streets and waterways.
- Washout facilities should only be for chute and tools washing. Truck washout and remaining concrete should be taken back to the plant.
- On smaller jobs a portable concrete washout facility is acceptable. For construction sites use the standards set forth in the Illinois Urban Manual (Practice Standard 954). <http://www.aiswcd.org/IUM/index.html>
- Washouts should be large enough to contain liquid and concrete waste generated by washout operations.
- Cover the washout area if there is a risk of overflows during rainstorms.
- Keep washout areas a minimum of 50 feet from storm drains, open ditches and water bodies and install signs for locating the washout.
- Replace plastic liner (30 mil) after every cleaning.
- Construct a stabilized construction entrance if washout isn't along stabilized surface to avoid tracking onto the street.
- Inspect washout daily to assure sidewalls are intact, leaks are absent, liner is not torn or ripped and there is adequate capacity remaining.
- Washout facilities must be cleaned or new facilities constructed and ready for use, one the washout container is 75% full.
- Under no circumstances should a washout facility be allowed to overflow.
- Locate in areas where construction traffic won't damage them.
- Solidified concrete waste from washout facilities shall be considered Clean Construction or Demolition Debris (CCDD) as per the Illinois Environmental Protection Act (415 ILCS 5) and disposed of in accordance to the Act.



Concrete Washout Requirements

As outlined in the IEPA (ILR10) General NPDES Permit for Storm Water Discharges from Construction Site Activities, concrete waste is considered a non-storm water discharge and therefore must be prohibited from entering “waters of the state”.

IEPA’s definition of Waters of the State is: *all accumulation of water, surface and underground, natural and artificial, public and private, or parts thereof, which are wholly or partially within, flow through, or border upon the State of Illinois.*

In Addition, Rockford City Codes Chapter 26-11.1 – Non-Storm Water and Industrial Storm Water Discharge and Chapter 109, Article 3(o) and Chapter 109, Article 12 of the Stormwater Ordinance also prohibits concrete waste from being dumped directly onto the ground or into the City’s storm sewer system.



Why Care About Clean Water?

Storm water pollution is one of the greatest threats to Rockford’s creeks and rivers. Clean water means safe drinking water, places for recreation, commercial opportunities, healthy wildlife habitats, and adds beauty to the landscape. Rain washes pollution from streets, parking lots and lawns into storm sewers and drainage ditches then directly to our streams, rivers and ultimately, the ocean.

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For More Information about the City of Rockford’s Storm Water Programs go to:
<http://www.rockfordil.gov/public-works/engineering-cip/stormwater.aspx>



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