

Toolbox talk – Environment



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Title:

Washing down plant and machinery

What?

- □ washing down plant and machinery, hosing down concrete truck mixers or degreasing engines can all lead to serious pollution incidents if it is not properly carried out
- □ the resulting dirty water should not be allowed to enter surface water drains or road gullies, which generally discharge directly into local streams, rivers or soakaways. This could potentially encourage the spread of invasive weeds to new areas
- □ careful consideration must be given to where washing down is carried out to ensure this activity is controlled.

Why?

- □ avoid environmental harm: dirty washing and rinsing water may contain dislodged mud, grease, oils, detergents, cleaning agents, invasive weeds or toxic chemicals and materials that can kill fish and other aquatic life and which may also seriously affect the surrounding environment
- avoid environmental harm: control and careful washing of plant and equipment can minimise the risk of further contamination of brownfield sites and potential for expensive clean-up operations
- □ avoid prosecution: it is an offence to allow polluting matter such as silt, cement, concrete, fuel, oils, cleaning chemicals and detergents to enter a watercourse, gully or drain. It is also illegal to cause invasive weeds to spread to new areas
- □ **reduce costs:** the cost of cleaning up a pollution incident far exceeds the cost of putting proper control measures in place.



Ouestions

- 1 Are there any receptors on this site that may be affected
- 2 Are there correct degreasers on this site?
- 3 Is there a designated controlled wash down area on this

Do

- ✓ ask a line manager if there is a place specially designated for washing down plant and machinery
- ✓ use only designated wash down areas
- ensure that any wash down slurry or residue is contained and cannot enter watercourses, gullies or drains
- check with a line manager before using degreasing or cleansing solutions - don't just assume they can be used
- ✓ report to a line manager any washing down that may cause a pollution incident
- ✓ ensure waste slurry/mud containing invasive weeds is disposed of appropriately.

Don't

- wash down before finding out the proper place to do it
- wash down directly into watercourses or surface water drains
- allow dirty wash down water to go down roadside gullies
- wash down near material or storage areas or immediately next to working areas
- use any more water than is necessary reduce waste.







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Given by:	Date:		
Site:			
Name	Company	Signature	