Quick facts on...

Concrete and Cementitious Washwater Management

Keep Highly Corrosive Washwater Out of Our Local Waterways

Cementitious washwater, including concrete washout, is the result of the cleaning of tools and equipment used in the mixing and working of cement-based materials.

Source: IDEM Site Management Factsheet

PURPOSE

THE PURPOSE OF CONCRETE AND CEMENTITIOUS WASHWATER MANAGEMENT:

To reduce the discharge of pollutants that are associated with washwater and associated materials.

- **Identify** types of cementitious materials such as concrete, mortar, plaster, stucco, grout, and flowable fill.
- **Remember** that cementitious washwater is highly corrosive with a pH level similar to bleach (pH 12-13).
- **Prevent** washwater, which often contains heavy metals, from leaching into soils and ground water.

An improperly managed mortar mixing station can allow corrosive washwater to enter the stormwater system through curb inlets.

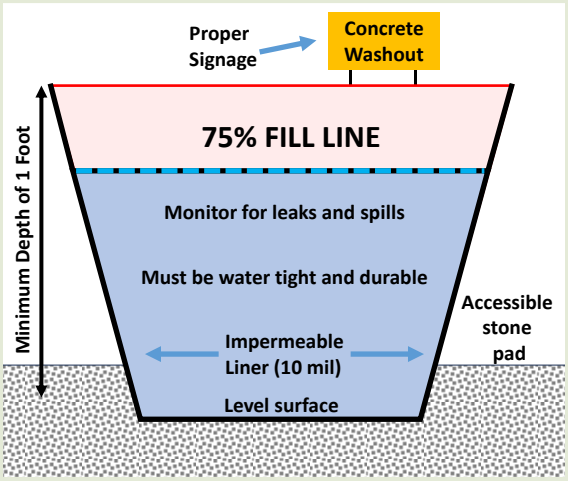
PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

IDEM CONSTRUCTION STORMWATER GENERAL PERMIT (CSGP) AND LOCAL REQUIREMENTS:

To manage cementitious washwater effectively, follow these steps:

- **Designate** a concrete washout area on-site.
- **Locate** washwater containments at least 50 feet from any waterbody, drain, or conveyance system.
- **Schedule** washout container pickup with a waste vendor.
- **Manage** plastic and hardened washout, which can be placed in dumpsters or regular trash.
- **Inspect** containers for leaks and clean up spills immediately using absorbent materials, such as sawdust or cat litter.
- **Replace** or close concrete washout container at 75% capacity.
- **Train** staff and sub-contractors on proper washwater management.

General Concrete Washout Design



Size washout containers based on the estimated amount of cementitious materials needed.

COMMUNICATION

COMMUNICATION AND CEMENTITIOUS WASHOUT:

Communication between developers and contractors helps reduce washout issues. Communication strategies include:

- **Holding** pre-pour meetings to make sure contractors are informed about expectations and washout locations.
- **Utilizing** signs with arrows to guide drivers to the correct washout area.
- **Marking** the location of washout areas with visible signage.
- **Notifying** contractors and sub-contractors when the washout area is being relocated.

Properly identify concrete washout areas with visible signage.

WASHOUT DESIGN ISSUES

CONRETE WASHOUT DESIGN ISSUES:

One of the biggest obstacles regarding concrete washout is the design and location of the washout area.

- **Place** washout areas in easily accessible and level areas outside of busy construction areas.
- **Provide** functional washout areas with wider and longer rock bases to allow vehicles to pull in closer to the washout sled or container.
- **Install** signage to designate the washout area and discourage the use of sleds and containers as trash cans.
- **Utilize** the rock base of washout areas for final rinses of truck windshield.
- **Plan ahead** for washout needs by having extra disposable concrete washout bags on site for drivers and contractors.

Washout area is accessible and placed on stone pad and away from storm inlets and water resources.

REGULATION EDUCATION

ENFORCEMENT AND EDUCATION OF REGULATIONS:

Consistent enforcement of regulations is contingent on the education of contractors, concrete trades, and regulators.

- **Communicate** to clarify expectations among the regulators, ready mixed concrete companies, construction personnel, and trades.
- **Educate** yourself and any contractors who may not be aware of the expectations and requirements set out by the CSGP and local municipality.
- **Inform** concrete finishers that they should contain washwater when rinsing their tools.
- **Ensure** the site you are working on is prepared to manage the concrete washout water that will be produced.
- **Talk** to your inspector or local municipality if there are any issues or questions about cementitious washout.

Avoid doing final rinse of trucks outside of the washout area.

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