



Managing Concrete and Mortar for the Professional

Why is it important?

Improper disposal of concrete, cement-related mortars and concrete/cement wastes causes environmental damage and violates City code. Eugene Code 6.010, 6.446, 6.645 and 6.805 prohibit discharges of non-stormwater substances, including biodegradable substances, into the stormwater collection system. The collection system includes street gutters, storm drains, vegetated facilities and open channels. The city stormwater system discharges to our local waterways untreated. Preventing pollutants from entering the stormwater system at the source is key to protecting our natural resources.

What you can do

Plan ahead

- Pour concrete, asphalt and seal coat only during dry weather, so they can cure before any water runs off surfaces.
- Store dry and wet materials off the ground, under cover, protected from wind, rainfall and surface water runoff.
- Securely close bags of cement after they are open. Keep wind-blown cement powder away from gutters, storm drains, rainfall and surface water runoff.
- Place erosion prevention measures down slope to capture runoff before it can reach a storm drain or waterway. Sandbags, rolled-up towels, or other non-porous barriers work best to stop the runoff where it can be vacuumed or mopped-up. Even clear water from concrete work will have extremely high PH levels, and should not be allowed to reach the street.
- Only allow the washing off of concrete tools or truck chutes into a watertight concrete-washout facility or 10 mil plastic-lined depression. Remove the concrete waste after it hardens (and plastic, if applicable) and dispose as trash.
- If you're mixing your own materials, mix up only the amount of fresh concrete or cement that you will use in a day.



- If you're using a commercial concrete delivery service, expect and instruct them to practice best management methods to protect water quality as described in this fact sheet.

Prepare your site for concrete work

- Cover all area drains on patios, walkways and driveways to prevent any concrete, slurry, cures, or finishing runoff from entering the drains.
- Set up and operate small mixers and/or wheelbarrows on tarps or heavy plastic drop cloths to collect spills. Discard the spilled material (and plastic, if applicable), in the trash.
- Construct an appropriate concrete washout area or place the watertight concrete-washout facility on site, Install a visible "Concrete Washout" sign nearby and brief all concrete workers on its location and use.
- Have absorbent, a wet-dry shop-vac, plastic and a plan developed to immediately address spills should they occur.

During construction

- Vacuum saw-cut slurry and/or finishing runoff and appropriately dispose of off-site, or in the concrete washout. Do not allow it to flow into stormwater drains, vegetated facilities, open drainage ways or onto adjacent properties .
- Wash down exposed aggregate, sand finish or stained concrete only when the wash water can flow onto a dirt area on site or drain onto a

containment area from which it can be pumped/vacuumed and disposed of properly. Make sure runoff does not reach street gutters or storm drains. Do not allow concrete wash water to enter the city planting strip between the curb and sidewalk.

- Never wash sweepings from exposed aggregate concrete into a street, storm drain, vegetated facility, drainage ditch or city planting strip. Collect and return to aggregate base stockpile or dispose in trash.

- When breaking asphalt or concrete, control excess dust using a small amount of water and control runoff.

Cleaning Up

- Place all excess concrete in a form, box, holder or designated washout area where it may be removed when it is hardened. Clean all finishing tools in the washout facility.

- Use the minimum amount of water to wash the chute, finishing tools and any other equipment.

- Wash out concrete mixers, pumping equipment and concrete finishing tools only in designated washout areas. Never dispose of washout into the city planting strip, street, storm drains, vegetated facility, drainage ditches or streams.

- After driveway or sidewalk construction, never wash fine particles down the driveway or into the street or storm drain. Collect and dispose of properly.

- Dispose of small amounts of excess dry concrete, grout and mortar in the trash.

- Never bury waste material where it can leach into groundwater and contaminate drinking water sources.

For more information:

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