

TOOLBOX TALK
NO.50

Cement and Concrete



What?

Cement and concrete are one of the most common materials used in construction. Cement is a highly alkaline material and is corrosive.

If cement or concrete enter a watercourse in an uncontrolled manner, it can have shocking effects on wildlife.

Why?

Avoid environmental harm: water contaminated with cement is highly alkaline and can be toxic to fish, plants and animals living in watercourses.

Avoid environmental harm: cement particles entering a watercourse can clog fishes' gills and destroy their spawning grounds.

Avoid prosecution: it is illegal to allow cement, unset concrete or washout water containing cement to enter a drain or watercourse.

Do

- ✓ Be conscious of all watercourses, gullies and drains prior to commencement of works
- ✓ Store bulk and bagged cement and concrete additives at least 10m away from watercourses, gullies and drains.
- ✓ Carry out mixing/batching works well away from watercourses, gullies and drains
- ✓ Ensure watercourses, gullies and drains are protected from nearby concreting works.
- ✓ Ensure special mixes are used for underwater concreting works
- ✓ Use only elected areas for concrete washout and ensure concrete delivery drivers are aware of where they are.

Don't

- ✗ Hose down spills of concrete or cement into watercourses, gullies and drains
- ✗ Allow washout water to flow into watercourses, gullies or drains.
- ✗ Allow ready-mix trucks to washout anywhere other than in areas designated for the purpose
- ✗ Wash off any tools or plant in watercourses.

Questions

1. Where are the designated washout areas on this site?
2. Where can bagged cement be stored on this site?
3. What should be done if any potential pollution incidents are seen?

Note: special permission is required before work can take place in a watercourse.