

# Best Management Practices (BMPs): *Concrete & Mortar*

LAND AND DRAINAGE ALTERATION PROGRAM (LDAP)

## Concrete & Mortar

*As a concrete company or contractor, you are responsible for protecting plants, animals, people, and waterways from concrete waste and wash water. The City of Springfield is here to help you properly manage concrete on the construction site.*

*Concrete contains heavy metals and significant amounts of sediment. It is highly alkaline and corrosive.*

### Problems caused by concrete material include:

- Polluted groundwater, which is where most of Springfield's drinking water comes from.
- Harmed fish and other aquatic life.
- Negative effects to stream pH, tree growth, and other parts of a healthy landscape.
- Build up in storm drains and the public stormwater system, which can cause flooding and costly repairs.

## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

In addition to harming land, water, and aquatic life, improper disposal of concrete, cement-related mortars, and concrete/cement wastes violate state and local laws and could lead to costly fines and penalties. It is against federal, state and local law to discharge non-stormwater substances into the stormwater system, even if they're natural or biodegradable. The stormwater system includes street gutters, storm drains and open channels.

## WHAT TO DO ABOUT CONCRETE

### 1) Plan ahead

- Plan to complete concrete, asphalt, and seal coat activities during dry weather, if possible. This will allow adequate time for them to set and cure before exposure to rain has the opportunity to carry them into local stormwater systems.
- Always store dry and wet materials in areas that remain protected from wind, rainfall, and runoff.
- Securely close bags of cement after they are open. Keep wind-blown cement powder away from gutters, storm drains, rainfall, and runoff.
- Identify the location of designated concrete wash/disposal areas on each jobsite.
- Install check dams or alternative collection methods down slope from areas of concrete work in order to capture contaminated runoff prior to entering storm drains or waterways.
- If mixing your own materials, prepare only the amount of concrete or cement required. If using a concrete delivery service, encourage them to protect water quality by using the methods described on this page.

### 2) Prepare the site

- Protect catch basins and manholes when applying seal coat, slurry seal, fog seal, etc., or when performing saw cut operations.
- Properly dispose of all spilled material and be prepared to contain all washwater on soil, preferably in a bowl-shaped area, to prevent it from leaving the washout area.
- Set up and operate small mixers on tarps or heavy plastic drop cloths to collect spills. Discard the spilled material in the trash.
- Designate an appropriate washout area on each jobsite and brief all concrete workers on its location and use.

### 3) During construction

- Shovel or vacuum saw-cut slurry and remove from the site, always preventing its discharge into stormwater drains or waterways.
- Wash down exposed aggregate concrete only in a manner that allows for proper collection and disposal of waste products.
- Never wash sweepings from exposed aggregate concrete into a street or storm drain. Collect and return to aggregate base stockpile or dispose of properly.
- When breaking asphalt or concrete, control excess dust using a small amount of water and control runoff. Remove all chunks and pieces from the site and recycle or dispose of properly. For a fee, Lane County's Glenwood Central Receiving Station will recycle small quantities of concrete. Please inquire with Lane County for current rates, quantities, and specific requirements for concrete disposal.



### 4) Clean up

- Place all excess concrete in a form, box, or designated washout area where it may be removed after it has hardened. Clean all finishing tools in a designated washout or other properly contained areas.
- 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 or other containment areas.
- Whenever possible, recycle washout by pumping it back into mixers for reuse. Never dispose of washout into the street, storm drains, drainage ditches, or streams.
- After driveway or sidewalk construction, wash fine particles onto soil or landscaped areas and avoid washing to paved areas that lead to streets and storm drains.
- Dispose of small amounts of excess dry concrete, grout, and mortar in garbage receptacles.
- Never bury waste material where it may leach into groundwater and contaminate drinking water sources.