

Ready Mix Concrete Industry Guidelines for Handling Concrete Chute Rinse Water at Construction Sites

The MPCA has approved the reissuance of the General Permit Authorization to Discharge Stormwater Associated with Construction Activity (Construction Activity Permit). The new regulations will go into effect in Minnesota on August 1, 2008 for all projects permitted after that date.

- The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency forbids discharging into the nation's waterways untreated wash water used in mixer rinse out operations. The Construction Activity Permit reflects the position of MPCA that all concrete chute rinse water, regardless of the size of the project, must not be discharged onto the ground and should be disposed of in an MPCA approved manner.
- Additionally the Construction Activity Permit requires the owners and operators (Permittees) to obtain a permit for construction activity in all areas of Minnesota five (5) acres or more of land is disturbed as well as a small construction activity equal or greater than one acre.
- The Construction Activity Permit does not allow concrete chute rinse water to come into contact with the ground at covered sites. These permits appear to allow plastic structural concrete to come into contact with the ground. Excess concrete from forms, pumps, and chutes may come into contact with the ground as long as they are disposed of in accordance with MPCA regulations when in a hardened state.

Ready Mix Concrete Industry Proposed Best Management Practices:

- The MPCA believes that ground water and surface water can be protected from all liquid concrete washout wastes, including washing of concrete tools, by using Best Management Practices (BMPs) for all projects.
- One Industry proposed BMP could involve all concrete chute rinse water being self contained and returned to an industrial site to be disposed of in an MPCA approved manner.
- Another industry proposed BMP could involve all concrete chute rinse water being collected in an on-site leak-proof containment facility or impermeable liner. An engineered clay liner is considered impermeable by MPCA. The rinse water then must be disposed of in an MPCA approved manner.
- Another industry proposed BMP could also be developed to ensure that hardened concrete is disposed of in accordance with MPCA regulations.

Definitions:

- Concrete chute rinse off water - liquid wastes generated when a ready mix truck operator washes non-structural concrete materials off the chutes used to deliver concrete to a project.
- Concrete equipment and tools rinse off water – liquid wastes generated when a concrete contractor or finisher washes non-structural concrete materials off tools or equipment used to place or finish concrete.
- Plastic concrete is that freshly mixed structural concrete which is pliable and capable of being molded or shaped like a lump of modeling clay.
- Hardened structural concrete is a strong, non-combustible, durable, abrasion-resistant and practically impermeable material.