



Pollution Prevention

Construction Site Fact Sheet No. 4



The Scoop When You Pollute

Pollution from construction sites such as sediment, diesel, solvents, concrete washout, hydraulic fluid, and litter all contribute to poor water quality in RI rivers, lakes, and Narragansett Bay.

Rainwater washes these pollutants off construction sites, into storm drains and nearby surface waters, degrading water quality and leading to loss of fishing and swimming areas. Toxic pollutants also can seep into the ground, contaminating groundwater supplies.



Contain All Chemicals!

Chemicals such as solvents, fertilizers, paints, and cleaners can leach into groundwater or runoff into surrounding waterbodies. This creates hazardous waste which threatens all waters.

What you can do:

- Store and dispose of all chemicals properly.
- Use chemicals carefully and prevent them from entering storm drains and surface waters.
- Keep a spill kit handy in a visible location.
- If you see a spill be proactive:
 1. **Stop it!**
 2. **Contain it!**
 3. **Report it!**

Lose the Litter!

Exposed trash such as coffee cups and waste building materials are easily swept up by rain into nearby streams. This clogs storm drains, harms water quality and wildlife, and decreases aesthetic value.

What you can do:

- Dispose of all trash in the proper receptacles.
- Keep dumpsters and trash receptacles covered.
- Clean up the site daily!



Designate Washout Areas

Concrete washout, stucco and paint are highly toxic to aquatic life. Without proper washout facilities, these wastes flow directly into waterbodies causing pollution and channel blockages. They also degrade soil quality for plants and threaten groundwater.

What you can do:

- Designate and clearly mark washout areas at least 50 feet away from natural resources and storm drains.
- Maintain all washout areas to assure they are working properly to contain waste.
- Make sure contractors and sub-contractors use them.

Designate Fueling Areas

Even small amounts of fuel, diesel oil, and hydraulic fluid can contaminate groundwater and poison aquatic life.

What you can do:

- Designate clearly marked fueling areas at least 50 feet away from natural resources and storm drains.
- Maintain all fueling areas.
- Clean up spilled fuel immediately.



Stockpiles should be covered at the end of each day.

Cover Stockpiles

Stockpiles are piles of sediment waiting for a rain event to break free. Not only will you lose building material, sediment flowing into waterways blocks light, smothers fish habitat, and fills in channels, exacerbating flooding.

What you can do:

- Locate stockpiles at least 50 feet away from natural resources and storm drains.
- Cover all stockpiles with either temporary vegetation or tarps to prevent erosion.
- Surround stockpiles with sediment barriers such as compost filter socks to prevent escaped sediment from washing away.

Stabilize Construction Exits

With vehicles and equipment constantly driving in and out, exits to construction sites can become hotspots for tracking soil onto paved surfaces. Without proper management, rain events will wash this sediment into the nearby waterbodies.

What you can do:

- Stabilize construction entrances by lining the driveway with geotextile fabric and covering it with crushed stone to prevent track out.
- Surround the driveway with sediment barriers prevent escaped sediment from washing away.



This construction entrance/exit is covered with crushed stone.

Control Dust and Loose Sediment

Active construction sites lose an average of 1.2 tons/acre of soil a month to windblown sediment. This dust blows onto roads where it can reduce driving visibility and is washed into storm drains and waterways by the next rain event.

What you can do:

- Control dust on site by controlling erosion through the use of soil stabilization techniques such as mulching or establishing temporary vegetation.
- Routinely sweep roads and paved surfaces to limit the sediment runoff.

***A clean (and compliant)
construction site
starts with
YOU!***

***Do your part
to keep our***

RI waterbodies healthy!