

E Safety – Toolbox Talk

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SILT POLLUTION

Silt is broad term applied to very fine particles of soils

Silt when mixed with water in the form of mud can be washed off construction sites into nearby drains and watercourses.

Silt pollution can be caused by: -

Rainwater run off from topsoil stripped areas of site, pumping out and dewatering of excavations and cleaning of ditches and drains.

By doing so we hope to be able to: -



Avoid environmental harm: large amounts of silt suspended in water can suffocate fish by blocking their gills, remove essential oxygen from the water and kill plants, animals and insects living in the water by stopping sunlight reaching them.

Avoid environmental harm: Silt can often combine with other contaminants such as oils and chemicals potentially causing greater pollution than silt alone

Avoid prosecution: because of the potential for harm, it is illegal to allow silt to enter a watercourse or drain. Silt pollution spoils the appearance of watercourses, is easily traceable to the site it originated from and has been responsible for some major prosecutions

- ✓ Only discharge silty water into designated settlement systems e.g. settlement tanks
- ✓ Check the effectiveness of site drainage and settlement systems; discolouration may indicate high pollutant levels.
- ✓ Maintain settlement systems periodically by cleaning out and disposing of correctly
- ✓ Stop pumping and contact your Supervisor if you believe there to be a problem
- ✓ Ensure all hard standings and easements are kept clean. Notify your Supervisor if an area is silty or covered in mud
- ✓ Notify Site Supervision immediately if you see silt entering a watercourse or drain. Attempt to stop the flow or divert the course, using sand bags, excavating a grip or terram covered Straw bales.

- ✗ DON'T dewater any excavation without getting approval from your Supervisor as to where to discharge too
- ✗ DON'T pump silty water directly into rivers, ditches or surface water drains
- ✗ DON'T strip land of vegetation unless absolutely necessary, vegetation natural stops silt run off
- ✗ DON'T store soil, stone or similar materials within 10 metres of watercourses or drains
- ✗ DON'T dig a grip to release ponded water to a watercourse

