Environmental care toolbox talk

Weather and environment · about 5 minutes · read it out, or say it in your own words

SITE OR JOB	DATE	PRESENTER

A few litres of diesel, oil or cement wash water poured into a storm water drain end up in a river, and rubble dumped on an open plot is illegal dumping. South African environmental law puts a duty of care on anyone who causes pollution, which on a small site means the contractor and the crew, and neighbours are quick to complain about dust and mess.

SAY THIS

Storm water drains go straight to the river

The drain in the street is not a sewer. Whatever goes into it, diesel, oil, paint, thinners, cement slurry, flows straight into the nearest stream or river without being cleaned. Nothing from our site goes down a storm water drain, and nothing gets washed into the gutter.

Stopping spills

Put drip trays under generators, mixers, compressors and parked plant. Refuel on a hard surface away from drains, with a spill kit or a bag of sand close by, and never leave a refuelling job unattended. If something spills: stop the leak if it is safe, keep it away from drains with sand or soil, soak it up, put the dirty sand in a marked drum, and tell the supervisor. By law, a big spill that could cause serious harm must be reported to the authorities at once, so never hide one.

Concrete and paint wash water

Wash out mixers, wheelbarrows, tools and brushes only in the washout area we have set up, where the water can settle and the solids can harden. Never wash them out onto the ground or into a drain. Clean water-based paint brushes in a bucket, not under the tap into the drain. Leftover thinners and solvents go back into a closed container.

Waste

First, waste less: order the right amounts and use offcuts. Keep rubble, timber, steel, packaging and general rubbish apart so what can be recycled or reused is. Paint tins, oil, fuel filters, chemical containers and contaminated rags are hazardous waste: keep them separate and marked. Do not burn rubbish on site. Never tip rubble or waste on an empty plot, in the veld or next to the road. It may only go to a proper waste site.

Dust and the neighbours

Dust blows over walls onto washing, cars and people's lungs. Damp down dusty areas and stockpiles, cover sand and loads on trucks, and sweep wet rather than dry. Cut and grind with water or dust extraction where we can. Keep the road outside clean of mud and sand.

CHECK ON SITE TODAY

- [ ] Check that drip trays are under generators, mixers and parked plant, and empty them safely.
- [ ] Find the spill kit or sand and drum, and check it is near the fuel and refuelling point.
- [ ] Look at the nearest storm water drain for cement, oil or paint stains.
- [ ] Check that the washout area is in use and not overflowing.
- [ ] Look at the skips and waste piles: is hazardous waste kept apart and marked?
- [ ] Check stockpiles and the road outside for blowing dust, mud and sand.

ASK THE CREW

- ? Where does the water from this site go when it rains?
- ? What would you do if the generator's fuel tank started leaking onto the ground?
- ? Which of our waste could be reused or recycled instead of going into the skip?
- ? What do the neighbours complain about, and what could we do better?

PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT FOR THIS JOB

Chemical-resistant gloves and safety glasses when cleaning up fuel, oil or chemical spills · Dust mask when sweeping or handling dusty materials, as set out in the dust talk

THE LAW

National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998, section 28: Duty of care and remediation of environmental damage; National Environmental Management Act 107 of 1998, section 30: Control of incidents; National Environmental Management: Waste Act 59 of 2008, section 16: General duty in respect of waste management; National Environmental Management: Waste Act 59 of 2008, section 26: Prohibition of unauthorised disposal. What each one says, in plain words, with links: sitediary.co.za/toolbox-talks/environmental-care/

Toolbox talk attendance register

TOPIC

Spills, waste and dust: looking after the environment

DATE

SITE OR JOB

TIME

PRESENTER

COMPANY

PRESENTER SIGNATURE

By signing, I confirm that I attended this toolbox talk, that it was given in a language I understand, and that I could ask questions.

NO.	NAME AND SURNAME	COMPANY OR TRADE	SIGNATURE
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