Maintenance areas (includes slipways and hardstands)

Updated March 2016[1]

EPA 926/16: This information sheet is part of a series on environmental management practices for vessel and facility management on marine and inland waters. The information is extracted from the code of practice published in 2008.

Introduction

If not managed effectively, vessel maintenance activities including cleaning, mechanical repairs, scraping, sanding, pressure blasting and painting can put pollutants into aquatic environments. It is important to perform these activities in areas where the risk of environmental harm can be minimised.

Who this applies to

- Vessel operators
- Slipway operators
- Marina operators
- Boat yard operators
- Boat ramp operators
- Boat and yacht club operators
- contractors

1 Updated according to *Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2015.*

Operators must (required outcomes)

1. obtain environmental authorisations (an EPA licence) for prescribed activities of environmental significance

2. ensure pollutants, to the maximum extent practicable, generated through maintenance operations are captured, contained, treated and reused or disposed of to a waste transporter or other appropriate waste management facility (eg sewer)

   OR

   treat pollutants generated through maintenance operations to a standard suitable for aquatic or land-based discharge by ensuring the discharge does not contravene water quality criteria applicable to those waters or cause environmental harm

   OR/AND

   ensure facility users are made aware of the limitations of the facility to manage pollutants and refer to individual responsibility to comply with *Environment Protection (Water Quality) Policy 2003*

3. prior to periods of tidal inundation or anticipated flooding of maintenance areas, ensure all reasonable and practicable measures have been undertaken to ensure pollutants cannot enter waters.

4. perform all vessel maintenance activities on a concreted or otherwise sealed and bunded hardstand or slipway area to ensure all waste and wastewater is contained. Moving vessels off the slipway to areas further inland for works is preferable

5. ensure stormwater drains are protected from vessel maintenance wastes and wastewaters through seals, bunds or first-flush diversion devices

6. regularly clean work areas to ensure optimum performance of pollution controls

7. install spray-drift controls (eg for painting, pressure water blasting). Curtains and portable screens can be effective

8. not perform abrasive blasting, pressure washing, hull scraping, sanding and painting on slipways or moorings without catchment devices

9. take tides, wave action and associated inundation into consideration during placement of waste and wastewater controls on vessel maintenance areas

10. not perform maintenance activities during spring tides or at times of bad weather where the pollution controls may be rendered inoperable or ineffective

11. require users to complete an operating report card at the conclusion of their maintenance activity and provide the facility operator with access to the recorded information

12. consign any pollutants recovered from the vessel facility after maintenance operations have ceased, and which have not been satisfactorily managed, to the generator of the pollutants

13. locate emergency management equipment within the maintenance areas or at very least within close proximity

14. train users in all aspects of environmental management related to the performance of vessel maintenance operations.

EPA licence requirements

A licence is required under the EP Act for the conduct of facilities that perform repairs or maintenance of vessels (over a certain threshold) and for some forms of high-pressure water blasting, abrasive blasting and painting (including those that are subcontracted). These licences prescribe conditions of authorisation that must be adhered to or prosecution will result. For more information, visit www.epa.sa.gov.au.

Waste and wastewater collection systems

A number of slipways and hardstands around Australia have been modified to ensure wastes and wastewaters no longer enter aquatic environments. Usually this involves the construction of catch drains and collection trenches, pits or sumps covered by removable grating and fitted with screen or mesh baskets to allow for inspection and removal of solids. In some cases, the baskets have become too heavy to manually lift without the aid of machinery and hence modifications have been made to reduce the size of the solid material passing through the grates. It is recommended that the first screening of solid material be no more than 10 mm in diameter and the final screening before treatment be no more than 2 mm in diameter. Collection systems should be designed to collect and hold all waste and wastewaters generated and, importantly, the first flush of contaminated stormwater runoff (recommended to be the first 10 mm of rainfall). Wastewater can then be passed through oil/grease removal devices to detention tanks (above or below ground) where, depending on its final discharge destination (i.e. sewer, irrigation, reuse or aquatic), it may undergo further treatment to remove heavy metals, which will involve the addition of more complex chemical filtration components.

Record keeping

Report cards could be used to record information that acts as a measure of accountability for having conducted a maintenance operation in an environmentally responsible manner. Having this type of record would be advantageous if ever there came a time where a maintenance operation was investigated for potentially causing environmental harm.

References

DHS & EPA, *SA reclaimed water guidelines*, www.epa.sa.gov.au/xstd_files/Waste/Guideline/reclaimed.pdf.

EPA, *EPA Guideline: Bunding and spill management*, www.epa.sa.gov.au/xstd_files/Waste/Guideline/guide_bunding.pdf.

EPA, *Code of practice for vessel and facility management (marine and inland waters)*, www.epa.sa.gov.au/xstd_files/Water/Code%20of%20practice/vessels.pdf.

Useful websites

EPA Vessel and facility management pages, www.epa.sa.gov.au/vfm.

Disclaimer

Further information

Legislation

Online legislation is freely available. Copies of legislation are available for purchase from:

Service SA Government Legislation Outlet
Adelaide Service SA Centre
108 North Terrace
Adelaide SA 5000

Telephone: 13 23 24
Facsimile: (08) 8204 1909
Website: shop.service.sa.gov.au
Email: ServiceSAcustomerservice@sa.gov.au

General information

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