

S434 BMPs for Dock Washing

Description of Pollutant Sources: Washing docks (or wharves, piers, floats, and boat ramps) can result in the discharge dirt, bird feces, soaps, and detergents that can be toxic to aquatic life, especially after they take on contaminants while cleaning. The BMPs in this section do not address dry docks, graving docks, or marine railway cleaning operations.

Pollutant Control Approach: Use dry methods and equipment (scraping, sweeping, vacuuming) to remove debris and contaminants prior to cleaning with water to prevent these substances from entering surface water.

Applicable Operational BMPs:

Surface Preparation and Spot Cleaning

- Scoop and collect debris and bird feces.
- Sweep, capture, and dispose of debris from the dock as solid waste. Sweep or vacuum docks to minimize the need for chemical cleaners.
- During cleaning activities, if debris, substances, or wash water could enter surface waters through drains, temporarily block the drains and collect the water for proper disposal.
- Hose down the area if necessary and collect water as feasible.
- Try spot cleaning with water and a coarse cloth before using soaps or detergents.
- If a cleaner is needed for spot cleaning:
 - Mix it in a bucket and use it to scrub down only the areas that need extra attention.
 - Start with vinegar and baking soda and move to other options as needed. Spot clean using a rag if harsher cleaning products are needed.
 - Avoid or minimize the use of petroleum distillates, chlorinated solvents, and ammoniated cleaning agents.
 - Use degreasers or absorbent material to remove residual grease by hand and do not allow this material to enter surface water.
 - Keep cleaners in sealed containers. Keep cleaner containers closed securely when transporting between the shore and docks.
 - Properly dispose of the dirty bucket water.

- Minimize the scour impact of wash water to any exposed soil at the landward end(s) of the dock or below the dock. Place a tarp over exposed soil, plant vegetation, or put berms to contain eroded soil.

Dock Washing and Disposal

- To the extent practicable, collect any wash water generated from hosing down, pressure washing, or cleaning dock areas, and dispose of it properly.
- The following video, provided courtesy of the Port of Seattle, highlights the methods they have developed to collect wash water generated during dock washing.



- Try pressure washing using light pressure. This uses less water and decreases the need for soap and scrubbing when washing the dock. Avoid using excessive pressure, which may damage the dock or send flakes of paint and other material into the water.
- Do not place any debris and substances resulting from cleaning activities in shoreline areas, riparian areas, or on adjacent land where these substances may erode into waters of the state.
- Where treated wood associated with the structure being washed are present, use non-abrasive methods and tools that, to the maximum extent practicable, minimize removal of the creosote or treated wood fibers when it removes marine growth from creosote or any other treated wood.
- Do not discharge removed marine growth to waters of the state where such marine growth would accumulate on the sea bed.
- Do not discharge emulsifiers, dispersants, solvents, or other toxic deleterious materials to waters of the state.

Washington State Department of Ecology

2019 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington (2019 SWMMWW)

Publication No.19-10-021