

28. DUE DILIGENCE

Due diligence program

Due diligence means that companies and/or individuals shall take all 'reasonable' precautions to prevent accidental and/or intentional discharges that are not authorised or may adversely impact on the sewerage system and/or the environment. To exercise due diligence, a discharger must implement a program to identify possible potential hazards and carry out the appropriate corrective action to prevent accidents or discharges of unauthorised trade waste arising from these hazards. Due diligence is the level of judgement, care, prudence, determination, and activity that could be 'reasonably' expected under particular circumstances.

In order to ensure reasonable care and due diligence it will at least be necessary for the due diligence program to establish the following:

- supervision of the system at all appropriate levels
- periodic inspection of key parts of the system
- involvement by managers and other officers, including review of relevant reports
- instruction of relevant line management in the setting up of the system
- reporting to management of the operation and effectiveness of the system and demonstrated ability to react immediately if the system has failed
- reporting structure for issues of non-compliance, or any concerns raised by regulatory authorities
- training of officers in environmental compliance
- compliance with environmental laws.

A company's liquid trade waste due diligence program should incorporate but not be limited to the following:

- identifying potential or hazardous situations (asking 'what if this or that happens?', 'what action will be taken?' what, where, how, when for all situations (Predict, Prepare, and Practice)
- a staff training and awareness program
- environmental audit procedures
- ensuring that liquid trade waste discharged to the sewerage system complies with the conditions of approval
- ensuring there is no discharge of stormwater to the sewerage system

- a treatment plant maintenance schedule
- a flow meter totaliser capable of retaining its reading in the event of a power failure
- ensuring the pH correction system, if provided, cannot be tampered with
- plant operator training
- standby procedures, including relief plant operator training
- OH&S training
- accountability and final destination of any waste disposal program
- effective solids and liquid waste disposal procedures
- a logbook (accessible to WRC) detailing maintenance and cleaning operations noting date, time and person making entry.


Contingency plan

A contingency plan is a set of procedures for responding to an incident that will affect the quality of liquid trade waste discharged to the sewerage system. The plan also encompasses procedures to protect the environment from accidental and unauthorised discharges to the stormwater drainage system from liquid trade waste discharges, and leaks and spillages from stored products and chemicals.

All dischargers should develop, maintain and update as necessary a contingency plan for responding to situations which may arise infrequently at their premises but will pose a threat to the environment or the sewerage system if allowed to occur without an adequately formulated response plan.

A company's contingency plan should incorporate but not be limited to the following:

- visual and audible alarms located in the area where it can be observed
- preventing overflows to the sewerage system in the event of an emergency
- a logbook (accessible to WRC) noting anything to do with incident, including date, time, remedial action, other relevant facts and person making entry
- emergency procedures for:
 - an accident (nominated control officer and procedure plans)
 - a spill (clean-up procedures)
 - a breakdown (may be necessary to carry stand-by equipment and spare parts such as pumps if these items are vital for the continuous effective operation of the pre-treatment system)
 - a power failure or disruption (if this occurs, it is unacceptable to discharge untreated liquid trade waste)
 - overloading or underloading of wastewater treatment systems
 - temporary unavailability of trained wastewater operators
 - temporary loss of access to wastewater disposal areas

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- storm, fire, floods
 - alternative waste disposal procedures and/or an emergency storage if any of the above incidents occur.
 - a list of emergency contacts in priority order including phone numbers in an accessible location (business hours and after hours):
 - internal contacts
 - external organisation contact information (EPA, WRC, fire brigade etc).

Having a contingency plan in place, and following it when such an incident or situation arises, enables better responses to incidents which may cause or threaten to cause harm to the sewerage system, the environment and worker or public health and safety.