

# POLLUTION PREVENTION GUIDANCE

STANDING ADVICE FOR PLANNING OFFICERS AND APPLICANTS SEEKING  
PLANNING PERMISSION FOR DEVELOPMENTS WHICH MAY IMPACT UPON THE WATER  
ENVIRONMENT

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## Introduction

Pollution Prevention should be a primary consideration during all stages of a development's lifecycle, from planning, construction, operation and maintenance all the way through to decommissioning or reinstatement of a site.

A good understanding of the pollution risks from your development will help reduce:

- The risk of incidences
- Impact to the water environment
- Point source and diffuse pollution
- Waste and costs
- Bad practice

## Information NIEA require for developments with the potential to impact upon the water environment

### Drainage Plans

Northern Ireland Environment Agency (NIEA) requires a detailed site drainage plan to be submitted with certain planning applications. This will help ensure the site is adequately designed to mitigate against potentially polluting activities from the development. Drainage plans should be included with planning applications involving commercial, refuelling, vehicle washing, industrial, extractive, energy and waste management related activities. Any unusual or novel proposal should also be accompanied by a detailed drainage plan.

A drainage plan should clearly show the site's storm drainage, foul sewers, any combined drainage systems and detail where all drainage discharges to. Silt traps, oil interceptors and any other drainage infrastructure incorporated into the drainage network should also be illustrated.

### Good Practice Planning and Implementation

The construction phase of a proposal is one of the most high risk stages of a development during which pollution is likely to occur.

If a development is in close proximity to a watercourse additional care will need to be taken to prevent pollution.

Any 'waterway' as defined by the Water (NI) Order 1999 will pose a constraint to a construction project. Consideration must be given at preliminary planning and design stages to ensure that impact on the receiving water environment during any testing, construction and operational phases are minimised.

The applicant and appointed contractor(s) must identify all the relevant Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPG) that relate to their proposal and must adhere to the guidance contained within these (see Table 1 below).

The main risks to a waterway during the construction and operational phases are from oil, hydrocarbons, fuel, chemicals, paint, suspended solids, concrete, cement and grout.

### **Construction Method Statements**

Works to be conducted in; near (within 10 metres) or liable to affect any waterway should be the subject of a construction method statement.

Generic method statements should be submitted along with the planning application although NIEA welcome full detail, if possible, at this stage. If an application is granted permission a full, detailed, site specific method statement will then be required from the appointed contractor(s). This will need to be submitted for our agreement a minimum of eight weeks prior to works beginning onsite.

The method statement should detail all mitigation measures identified to prevent pollution of the water environment during the construction, operational and maintenance phase of the project.

Implementing and strictly adhering to an agreed method statement is important to minimise the impact of the proposal on the water environment.

Works method statements should as a minimum:

- Identify risks to waterways e.g. from cement, concrete, grout, suspended solids, chemicals, paint and hydrocarbons including fuels or oils
- Identify potential pollution pathways
- Demonstrate adherence to good working practices as detailed in current guidance. All relevant PPGs e.g. PPG 5 Works in, near or liable to affect watercourses and PPG 6 Working at Demolition and Construction sites.
- Detail mitigation measures to be employed to minimise the risk of pollution to any waterway (as defined by the Water (NI) Order 1999) and should include:
  1. Safe refuelling procedures and secondary containment for chemicals, oil, fuels etc
  2. Emergency spill procedures
  3. Best practice for handling and storage of earth stockpiles
  4. NIEA's Pollution Prevention hotline number 0800 80 70 60. It is recommended that in the event of a water pollution incident the NIEA water pollution hotline is contacted within 30 minutes unless it is not safe to do so.

Such measures must be in place prior to the commencement of any works and should be incorporated in method statements.

## Oil Storage Regulations

The Oil Storage Regulations create new standards for above ground Oil Storage facilities in industrial, commercial and Institutional sectors.

In summary, the Regulations apply to:

- Above ground oil storage in containers over 200 litres
- Private domestic or residential oil tanks over 3,500 litres
- Industrial, commercial and institutional/residential establishments (e.g. schools, day care centres, hospitals nursing homes)
- Waste oil storage and companies who refine or distribute oil
- Oil stored in buildings

The Regulations do not apply to:

- Oil stored on farms solely for agricultural use
- Oil stored on premises regulated under the Control of Major Accident Hazards-Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000 where the container is 2500 tonnes or more
- Oil stored wholly underground

Please note that there are some exceptions to the above circumstances. Full details can be found in the guidance detailed at the end of this section.

A key requirement of the Regulations is that oil storage containers covered by the Regulations, fixed or mobile, must have a secondary containment system (of 110% capacity) as defined by the regulations (e.g. a bund, which is an outer wall or enclosure designed to contain the contents of an inner tank, or a drip tray) to ensure that any leaking oil is contained and does not enter the aquatic environment.

Guidance on how the Regulations will apply to your development can be found in PPG 2: above ground oil storage tanks, which can be viewed using the following link:  
<http://www.netregs.org.uk/pdf/PPG%202%20-%20Aug%202011.pdf> (PDF 276KB)

Full guidance on the Regulations can be found at:

<https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/sites/default/files/publications/daera/control-of-pollution-oil-storage-regulations-guidance.pdf> (PDF 1.13MB)

## Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPG)

A range of Pollution Prevention Guidelines (PPGs) have been produced which are targeted at a particular type of business or activity. NIEA recommend **these PPGs should be referred to by planning applicants, building contractors and development operators as a source of information on good practice regarding their proposed development.**

PPGs can be obtained at:

[http://www.netregs.org.uk/library\\_of\\_topics/pollution\\_prevention\\_guides/all\\_ppgs.aspx](http://www.netregs.org.uk/library_of_topics/pollution_prevention_guides/all_ppgs.aspx)

Please note that some PPGs available at the above link have been withdrawn but still provide useful background information.

**Table 1 All Current Pollution Prevention Guidelines**

PPGs	Name	Description
PPG 1	Understanding your environmental responsibilities - good environmental practices	A basic introduction to pollution prevention, with signposts to other PPGs and publications. (July 2013)
PPG 2	Above ground oil storage tanks	For above ground oil storage, excluding oil refineries and distribution depots. (August 2011)
PPG 3	Use and design of oil separators in surface water drainage systems	For identifying where an oil separator is required and, if so, what size and type of separator is appropriate. (April 2006)
PPG 4	Treatment and disposal of sewage where no foul sewer is available	For selecting the correct sewage disposal, treatment and disposal options, and maintenance and legal requirements. (July 2006)
PPG 5	Works and maintenance in or near water	These guidelines cover construction and maintenance works in, near or liable to affect surface waters and groundwaters. (October 2007)
PPG 6	Working at construction and demolition sites	For the construction and demolition industry. (2012)
PPG 7	The safe operation of refuelling facilities	For operators of liquid fuel refuelling facilities; it applies to all types of fixed refuelling facilities. (July 2011)
PPG 8	Safe Storage and disposal of used oils	For storing and disposing of used oils. Applies to activities ranging from a single engine oil change to those of large industrial users. (February 2004)
PPG 13	Vehicle washing and cleaning	For washing and cleaning any vehicle using automatic wash systems, high pressure or steam cleaners and washing by hand. (July 2007)
PPG 18	Managing Fire Water and Major Spillages	For identifying equipment and techniques available to prevent damage to the water environment caused by fires and major spillages. (June 2000)
PPG 20	Dewatering of underground Ducts and chambers	For dewatering underground ducts and inspection chambers. (March 2001)
PPG 21	Incident Response Planning	For producing emergency pollution incident response plans to deal with accidents, spillages and fires. (March 2009)
PPG 22	Dealing with spills	For incident response - dealing with spills. (April 2011)
PPG 26	Drums and intermediate bulk containers	For site operators of industrial and commercial premises storing and handling drums and intermediate bulk containers (IBCs) containing oil, chemicals or potentially polluting substances. (March 2011)
PPG 27	Installation, decommissioning And removal of underground Storage tanks	For installing, removing and decommissioning all underground storage tanks (USTs), including those containing petroleum, diesel, fuel oil, aviation fuel, waste oil, domestic heating oil and other potentially polluting materials such as organic solvents. (April 2002)
PPG 28	Controlled Burn	For using controlled burns as part of a fire fighting strategy to prevent or reduce damage to the environment. (July 2007)

The following guidance replaces previous PPGs and is the current best practice in the respective area.

**Table 2 Documents replacing withdrawn PPGs**

<b>Name/Topic</b>	<b>Guidance link</b>
Pesticides - Code of Practice for Using Plant Protection Products	Northern Ireland Guidance <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/code-practice-using-plant-protection-products">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/publications/code-practice-using-plant-protection-products</a>
Sheep dip	Groundwater authorisation for disposal of sheep dip <a href="https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/groundwater-authorisations">https://www.daera-ni.gov.uk/articles/groundwater-authorisations</a>
Dairies and other milk handling operations	Guidance on <a href="#">waste management</a> and what causes <a href="#">water pollution</a>
Stables, kennels and catteries	NetRegs advice on animal and boarding care (previously PPG24) <a href="http://www.netregs.org.uk/business_sectors/animal_boarding_care.aspx">http://www.netregs.org.uk/business_sectors/animal_boarding_care.aspx</a>
Hospitals and health care establishments	For hospital and health care establishment pollution prevention, read our guidance on <a href="#">waste management</a> , <a href="#">swimming pools</a> and <a href="#">healthcare</a> (previously PPG 25)

## NIEA Pollution Prevention Hotline

NIEA have a 24 hour Pollution Prevention Hotline number (0800 80 70 60). Any observed incident of pollution should be reported to the Pollution Hotline number as soon as possible, to enable the matter to be fully resolved and investigated in a timely manner.

## Final Comments

Effective mitigation measures must be in place to protect the water environment and surrounding water bodies from any discharge into them that may damage ecological status and to ensure that the Water Framework Directive (WFD) objectives for the water body are not compromised nor the WFD objectives in other downstream water bodies in the same and other catchments.

It is an offence under the Water (Northern Ireland) Order 1999 to discharge or deposit, whether knowingly or otherwise, any poisonous, noxious or polluting matter so that it enters a waterway or water in any underground strata. Conviction of such an offence may incur a fine of up to £20,000 and / or three months imprisonment.



**Creating prosperity and well being  
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excellence**

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