

IC7. NURSERIES AND GREENHOUSES

Pollution Prevention

Consider pollution prevention measures at all times for improving pollution control. Implementation of pollution prevention measures may reduce or eliminate the need to implement other more costly or complicated procedures.

The following pollution prevention principles apply to most industries:

- Affirmative Procurement - Use alternative, safer, or recycled products.
- Redirect storm water flows away from areas of concern.
- Reduce use of water or use dry methods.
- Reduce storm water flow across facility site.
- Recycle and reuse waste products and waste flows.
- Move or cover potential pollution from storm water contact.
- Provide on-going employee training in pollution prevention.

1. Properly manage irrigation and runoff.
 2. Properly store and dispose of gardening wastes.
 3. Properly store and dispose of chemicals.
 4. Properly manage pesticide and herbicide use.
 5. Properly manage fertilizer use.
 6. Train employees on these BMPs, storm water discharge prohibitions, and wastewater discharge requirements.
- OPTIONAL:
7. Incorporate integrated pest management techniques where appropriate.

Best Management Practices

1. Properly manage irrigation and runoff.

- Utilize intermittent (pulse) irrigation or drip irrigation so the infiltration rate of the soil is not exceeded.
- Regularly inspect irrigation systems for leaks and to ensure that excessive runoff is not occurring.
- Convert paved or bare soil areas to vegetation that will retard runoff (turf grasses or other comparable plant materials) wherever possible.

OPTIONAL:

- Group plants with similar water needs together to improve irrigation efficiency.
- Establish plant buffer zones between production areas and ditches, creeks, ponds, lakes, or wetlands.
- Install and use moisture sensors and automatic sprinklers for more accurate scheduling of irrigation.
- Recycle runoff, blend with fresh water as necessary.

2. Properly store and dispose of gardening wastes.

- Dispose of grass clippings, leaves, sticks, or other collected vegetation as garbage at a permitted landfill or by composting.
- Do not dispose of gardening wastes in streets, waterways, or storm drainage systems.
- Place temporarily stockpiled material away from watercourses and storm drain inlets, and berm and/or cover.

3. Properly store and dispose of chemicals.

- Implement storage requirements for pesticide products with guidance from the local fire department and/or County Agricultural Commissioner.
- Provide secondary containment for chemical storage.

- Dispose of empty containers according to the instructions on the container label.

OPTIONAL:

- Triple rinse containers and use rinse water as product.

4. Properly manage pesticide and herbicide use.

- Follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and disposal of pesticides and herbicides and training of applicators and pest control advisors.
- Follow manufacturers' recommendations and label directions.
- Use pesticides only if there is an actual pest problem (not on a regular preventative schedule). When applicable use less toxic pesticides that will do the job. Avoid use of copper-based pesticides if possible. Use the minimum amount of chemicals needed for the job.
- Do not apply pesticides if rain is expected or if wind speeds are above 5 mph.
- Do not mix or prepare pesticides for application near storm drains. Prepare the minimum amount of pesticide needed for the job and use the lowest rate that will effectively control the pest.
- Do not mix, prepare, or spray pesticides within 100 feet of any well, stream, or pond.
- Do not get rid of unused pesticides by washing them down drains.
- Employ techniques to minimize off-target application (e.g. spray drift) of pesticides, including consideration of alternative application techniques.
- Clean pavement and sidewalk if chemicals are spilled on these surfaces before applying irrigation water

OPTIONAL:

- Careful soil mixing and layering techniques using a topsoil mix or composted organic material can be used as an effective measure to reduce herbicide use and watering.

5. Properly manage fertilizer use.

- Follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and disposal of fertilizers.
- Follow manufacturers' recommendations and label directions.
- Employ techniques to minimize off-target application (e.g. spray drift) of fertilizer, including consideration of alternative application techniques. Calibrate fertilizer distributors to avoid excessive application.
- Periodically test soils for determining proper fertilizer use.
- Whenever feasible, spread out applications of controlled-release fertilizers and use split applications of soluble fertilizers over the growing season.
- Work fertilizers into the soil rather than dumping or broadcasting them.
- Sweep pavement and sidewalk if fertilizer is spilled on these surfaces before applying irrigation water.

OPTIONAL:

- Transition from the use of soluble fertilizers to controlled-release fertilizers. Use slow release fertilizers whenever possible to minimize leaching.
- Reduce or eliminate routine leaching of crops.

6. Training

1. **Train employees on these BMPs, storm water discharge prohibitions, and wastewater discharge requirements.**
2. **Educate and train employees on the use of pesticides and pesticide application techniques.**
3. **Train and encourage maintenance crews to use integrated pest management techniques.**
4. **Train employees on proper spill containment and cleanup.**
 - Establish training that provides employees with the proper tools and knowledge to immediately begin cleaning up a spill.
 - Ensure that employees are familiar with the site's spill control plan and/or proper spill cleanup procedures.
 - BMP IC17 discusses Spill Prevention and Control in detail.
5. **Establish a regular training schedule, train all new employees, and conduct annual refresher training.**
6. **Use a training log or similar method to document training.**

OPTIONAL:

7. **Incorporate the following integrated pest management techniques where appropriate:**
 - Remove insects by hand and place in soapy water or vegetable oil. Alternatively, remove insects with water or vacuum them off the plants.
 - Use species-specific traps (e.g. pheromone-based traps or colored sticky cards).
 - Sprinkle the ground surface with abrasive diatomaceous earth to prevent infestations by soft-bodied insects and slugs. Slugs also can be trapped in small cups filled with beer that are set in the ground so the slugs can get in easily.
 - In cases where microscopic parasites, such as bacteria and fungi, are causing damage to plants, the affected plant material can be removed and disposed of (pruning equipment should be disinfected with bleach to prevent spreading the disease organism).
 - Small mammals and birds can be excluded using fences, netting, and tree trunk guards.
 - Promote beneficial organisms, such as bats, birds, green lacewings, ladybugs, praying mantis, ground beetles, parasitic nematodes, trichogramma wasps, seedhead weevils, and spiders that prey on detrimental pest species.

References

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