



## Storm Water Pollution Prevention Background



In 1987 and 1989, the Federal Clean Water Act (CWA) was amended to include storm water runoff. Under the CWA, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit governs storm water runoff from storm sewer systems, construction sites, and industrial activities. Caltrans is regulated by NPDES because 1) highways and related facilities are served by extensive storm sewer systems and 2) construction of highways and related facilities often results in soil disturbance exceeding 5 acres - which triggers specific requirements in the regulation.

To ensure regulatory compliance, Caltrans has been working diligently in recent years to control the quantity of water pollutants resulting from the construction and maintenance of Caltrans facilities through practical, cost effective, and reliable programs such as:

- Preparing guidance documents for construction, design, maintenance and contractor personnel.
- Conducting training courses with Caltrans construction, design, and maintenance staffs as well as contractors' construction personnel.
- Providing storm water pollution prevention inspection assistance to construction and maintenance personnel.
- Preparing contract specifications and guidance documents to more adequately address storm water pollution issues.
- Preparing a Statewide Storm Water Management Plan and applying for a Statewide permit.
- Performing monitoring and research studies to better understand how Caltrans activities affect storm water runoff.

## Storm Water Compliance Review Task Force

The formation of the *Storm Water Compliance Review Task Force* is another step in the process of continuous improvement and a critical element in the required self-monitoring aspect of the regulation. The mission of the Storm Water Compliance Review Task Force is to review construction projects and maintenance operations throughout the state with the following goals in mind:

- Provide on-the-job training to Caltrans on-site management regarding appropriate and effective BMP implementation and regulation compliance.
- Ensure that projects or operations that are not in compliance with regulations are brought into compliance.
- Gather information about the effectiveness of BMPs, generate ideas for improving BMPs, and identify problems that need further research for solutions.
- Gather information about Caltrans storm water program in action and identify potential improvements for management use in formulating policies and plans.
- Disseminate lessons learned, good ideas, and common challenges observed throughout the state in order to shorten the learning curve for all involved.



The task force consists of a consultant team of senior construction management personnel led by Caltrans Environmental Engineering Staff. Compliance reviews are performed in teams of two.

## Results

The Storm Water Compliance Review Task Force has just finished a six-week review of the larger construction projects throughout the state. The issuance of Storm Water Pollution Prevention Bulletins is one of the benefits of this experience. These bulletins will be issued two times each month, and will cover topics ranging from non-storm water discharges to suggestions for implementing source reductions. Additional benefits include evaluation of BMP effectiveness and identification of further management improvements.

The results of Caltrans' continuous improvement strategies such as the Storm Water Compliance Review Task Force benefits not only Caltrans in meeting their goals, but also benefits the people and industries in the State of California in gaining a better understanding of storm water pollution prevention strategies.



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