

# Handling liquid waste

**If handled inappropriately, liquid wastes can harm the environment and your business. The following tips will help you ensure that liquid wastes are handled safely in your workplace.**

## Identify areas on-site where liquid waste is handled, such as:

- waste storage areas
- loading and unloading areas
- production lines that generate liquid waste
- wastewater treatment plants
- 'wet areas' where equipment or floors are routinely cleaned.

## Inspect areas where liquid waste is handled and make sure that:

- liquid waste handling areas are clean, tidy and free of trip hazards
- storage areas are routinely maintained and free of debris, rainwater and liquid waste
- stormwater drains are not located in areas where liquid waste is stored or handled

- all drums, containers and tanks that contain liquid waste are clearly labelled to identify their contents, and lids or caps are secure
- spill kits are located in areas where liquid waste is handled (see Liquid Waste Fact Sheet—Preventing spills).

## Make sure liquid waste does not enter the stormwater system, by:

- locating all drains at your premises and knowing where they discharge to
- identifying the drains that are connected to the stormwater system and ensuring that only uncontaminated rainwater enters them
- ensuring that drains inside buildings or covered areas do not discharge to the stormwater system
- clearly labelling all drains at your premises and knowing which drains can only accept uncontaminated stormwater.



Do not handle or store liquid waste in areas where stormwater drains are located.



Make sure liquid waste handling areas are clean and tidy.

## Improve the handling of liquid waste and minimise the risk to the environment

- Ensure waste loading and unloading activities are adequately supervised.
- Train forklift operators in the special care required for handling drums and other vessels containing liquid wastes.
- Minimise the distance that liquid waste containers need to be moved on site.
- Implement a maintenance plan for regular cleaning of stormwater drains.

- Routinely check production lines and wastewater treatment plants for leaks and immediately fix any leaks that are found.
- Minimise the need to decant liquid waste to and from drums and other vessels that contain liquid waste, and only do so in bunded areas.
- Prevent overflows by installing emergency devices (such as shut-off valves and audible alarms) to equipment that handles liquid waste.



Identify the drains that are connected to stormwater and make sure that only uncontaminated rainwater enters these drains.



Regularly check spill response stations to make sure they contain all the appropriate equipment.



## Take care with liquid wastes ...

**Businesses that handle liquid waste in a way that threatens the environment can be issued with a legal notice to take action, fined and/or can face court action.**

**Stormwater flows directly to local waterways ... remember the drain is just for rain.**

