NYC GREEN CODES
LEGISLATION AT A GLANCE

GCTF Proposal
Treat Corrosive Concrete Wastewater

Implemented
Local Law 70 of 2011, City Council Intro 0576-2011

Summary
Concrete trucks, buckets and washout pump trucks are typically rinsed at construction sites, and the runoff is then directed to a stormwater drain. This water is corrosive and should not be discharged onto public streets or into rivers.

This law requires wastewater from concrete mixer trucks to be either treated on site or returned to the manufacturing plant for treatment. It requires rinsing and wastewater containers to be located at least 30 feet from sewers.

New Requirements or Changes
Effective: July 1, 2012. These changes do not apply retroactively; they are only triggered when construction activity requires a permit for work covered by this section of the Construction Codes.

Amendments to Section 3302.1 of the Building Code:

• Adds a definition for “Concrete Washout Water,” which is wastewater from rinsing of equipment used to mix, transport, or place concrete. This includes “concrete buckets, concrete hose lines and pumps, boots, shovels, finishing tools, wheelbarrows, motorized concrete carts, concrete pour funnels and the chute of concrete mixer trucks.”
• The definition excludes projects with small amounts of concrete:
  o For concrete mixed on site, up to 1 ½ cubic yards or less.
  o For bagged ready mix concrete, up to 60 eighty-pound bags, 80 sixty-pound bags or equivalent
• Wastewater from rinsing the wheels, undercarriage or chassis of mixer trucks is excluded.

Amendments to Section 3303.15 of the Building Code:

• Concrete washout water is prohibited from entering sewers, catch basins, or bodies of water, or from leaching into the ground.
• The washout water must be collected and contained in either:
  o The mixer truck and transported off site for treatment or disposal; or
  o Pre-manufactured watertight containers specifically designed for on site collection of concrete washout water, with sufficient container capacity to accommodate all rinsing operations and protection from breach or overflow. The on site washout water must be allowed to evaporate completely and any hardened concrete remaining must be disposed of, reused or recycled.
• Unless the commissioner approves otherwise, rinsing and washout water containers must be at least 30 feet from sewers, catch basins, or bodies of water.

**Enforcement**

These new and revised provisions are a standard part of the Building Code. They will be enforced by the Department of Buildings in the same manner as any other element of the Construction Codes.

**Implementation**

The cost effective and space efficient solution for containing washout water is for mixer trucks to carry pails that hook onto the bottom of the chute during chute rinse. The pail captures the wastewater from rinsing the chute, which is the major source of polluted washout water from rinsing a mixer truck. The pail is connected to a small tank on the truck by a rubber hose, emptying into the tank by gravity when the chute is raised post rinsing. The tank of waste water is then returned to the concrete manufacturer’s plant with the truck, and released into the manufacturer’s own water treatment system. In addition to being cost-effective, this approach does not generate additional vehicle miles or require outside treatment facilities.

Pump trucks and other equipment that cannot be rinsed into a pail will have to be rinsed over a specialized bin or dumpster for containing concrete wash out water. If the site has enough space to leave these dumpsters in place until the water evaporates, the concrete left behind can be disposed off with other construction waste. If the site is space-constrained, a wastewater pump truck will have to suck out the excess water periodically. When the dumpster is full of concrete and sediment and unable to hold more wash off water, it will be hauled away and emptied. Special concrete washout water dumpsters have a non-stick surface that enables the concrete to slide out.