NATIONAL ACCELERATOR LABORATORY

ENVIRONMENT, SAFETY & HEALTH DIVISION

Chapter 26: Stormwater

Category 19 BMPs – Weed Abatement

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Category 19 *best management practices (BMPs)* describe different types of vegetation management strategies and how to use herbicides more safely on site at SLAC when removing invasive plants species or weeds. Improper use of herbicides may result in stormwater runoff pollution, especially in or near drainage areas. (For activities to which these and other BMP categories apply, see Stormwater: Best Management Practices Index.)

The best approach to preventing stormwater pollution from herbicide application is to use physical vegetation abatement methods in lieu of chemical methods. If herbicides are being used, there are effective techniques to mitigate the risk of impact to stormwater runoff.

Best Management Practices

19.1 Use physical methods of weed abatement whenever possible. This includes mowing, hand removal, or removal with tools.

19.2 If herbicides are needed, use only Roundup or other similar glyphosate-containing herbicides. Roundup is the herbicide recommended by both the US Environmental Protection Agency and San Mateo County.

19.3 Do not use herbicides in or near (on the banks of) drainage channels, wetlands, or waterways.

19.4 Before using an herbicide, consider the weather and time of year. Avoid use of herbicides 24–48 hours before predicted rainfall to minimize the risk of the chemical entering stormwater runoff and avoid applying the herbicide when it is windy to prevent the herbicide from drifting away from the desired location.

19.5 Use precise, targeted application of the herbicide. Broadcast spraying can result in the herbicide impacting nearby non-target plant species and increases the risk of the herbicide entering stormwater.

19.6 Document which plant species are treated with herbicide and how effective the product is at removing the species (for example, how long the plant is suppressed after application). This can help to determine the minimum amount and frequency of product application that is necessary when controlling vegetation to ensure that only invasive species and weeds are being treated by the herbicide.

References

SLAC Environment, Safety, and Health Manual (SLAC-I-720-0A29Z-001)

- Chapter 26, “Stormwater”
  - Stormwater: Best Management Practices Index (SLAC-I-750-0A16V-001)

Other SLAC Documents

- Water Resources

Other Documents

- San Mateo County Department of Public Works. Vegetation Management