

Rest Area and Roadside Facilities Management

5.11 Rest Area and Roadside Facilities Management

Highway rest areas and roadside facilities, including septic field maintenance, disposal of compost toilet materials, and litter and garbage collection, require regular maintenance activities to ensure they remain safe and useable for the motoring public.



Environmental Issues

Primary environmental issues relating to routine rest area and roadside facilities management activities are summarized in the following table. It should be noted that site-specific conditions might present additional issues you will need to address in planning and undertaking your works.

Highway Maintenance Specification Sections

4-380 Rest Area and Roadside Facilities Maintenance

Available at:

http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/BCHighways/contracts/maintenance/Schedule_21_Maintenance_Specifications.pdf

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Work Activity	Potential Environmental Impacts	Performance Standards and Legal Requirements
Septic System Maintenance	May pose a threat of disease through improper storage or disposal of sewage	Installation, construction and maintenance of sewage disposal facilities in accordance with applicable legislation (<i>BC Health Act</i> , Sewage Disposal Regulations). Disposal and storage of septic wastes in accordance with local public health regulations and bylaws.
	May damage habitat through the improper location of septic systems or disposal sites near ditches, wetlands, or other significant habitat areas	No release of any substance that could be deleterious (toxic) to fish or fish habitat (<i>Fisheries Act</i> , Sections 34(1) and 36(3)). No harmful alteration, disruption or destruction of fish habitat without authorization (<i>Fisheries Act</i> , Section 35(1)). No alteration of a stream unless authorized by an approval, licence, or order (<i>Water Act</i> , Section 9), or through a Notification (<i>Water Act</i> Regulation, Part 7).
Potable Water Supply Maintenance	May impact public health through potential contamination risk to drinking water quality.	Collection of water samples as required by any MoT Local Area Specification, in accordance with the <i>Drinking Water Protection Act</i> and Regulations.
Garbage and Litter Disposal	May threaten both wildlife and public safety through the attraction of wildlife to rest areas and roadside facilities	Storage of garbage and litter in wildlife-protected litter containers and timely disposal of garbage.
	May contaminate surface waters, groundwater, and soils through improper storage or disposal of waste material Wasps and other insects may pose a health concern in garbage receptacles	Reporting of any polluting substance spills (<i>Environmental Management Act</i> , Section 79(5)) and disposal of all waste materials in accordance with the <i>Act</i> (<i>Environmental Management Act</i> , Waste Disposal Regulation). Timely removal of garbage, secure containers.
Noxious Weed / Invasive Plant Control	Invasive plants may establish at rest areas/pullouts through motorist activity & vehicles, and become a source for further spread if not treated/removed properly. May displace desirable native vegetation	No spread of invasive plants and control of noxious weeds (<i>Weed Control Act</i> , Weed Control Regulation).



Environmental Best Practices

The following BPs are provided as guidelines to help you ensure your routine works are completed in compliance with the performance standards and environmental legislation. Please note that the general BPs provided apply for most work activities within this category; if BPs specific to the activity are available they are also noted below.

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Regulatory Agency Contact

- Prior to beginning your rest area and roadside facilities management activities, identify any sensitive habitat areas, including watercourses – streams, lakes and marine foreshores– found within your work area.
- Determine how much impact your required works will have on the identified areas. Are you replacing a septic tank at a lakeside rest area? Where will you place the wastes you remove from the site? Are you removing noxious weeds or invasive plants? By asking these questions, you should be able to identify any planned works that may be of concern to regulatory agencies.
- Meet with the appropriate regulatory agency contact, as listed in Section 8, to discuss site-specific environmental protection measures. Refer to Section 7 for information on the Memorandum of Understanding with MoE and the recommended protocol for maintaining regular communications with regulatory agencies.
- For potable water issues, contact the local Drinking Water Protection Officer.
- For invasive plant control work, meet with the local invasive plant coordinator and/or weed control contractors to review proposed vegetation control work.

Timing of Works

For most work activities within this category, the following general BPs apply:

- Works are preferably undertaken during periods of dry weather (e.g., summer) as this allows easier control of sediment. Typically this is also a less sensitive period for fish and wildlife than other seasons. If the work schedule requires working in the rain, the area of work must be isolated and appropriate sediment controls must be installed to prevent the release of sediment-laden water or any other deleterious substances.
- If your maintenance activities require work instream, you must schedule them to coincide with your region's instream work window. Contact your local MoE and DFO offices for further information on timing windows for your District.
- Be aware that vegetation clearing can negatively impact nesting birds in spring and early summer. Inspect your work area for any occupied bird nests, eggs, or nests of species protected under the *Wildlife Act* and *Migratory Bird Convention Act* during this period.

Site Management

- Should your works involve the disturbance of soils or the use of erodible materials (e.g., sands, topsoil) near watercourses, prevent the transport of sediment through the installation of appropriate erosion and sediment control BPs and devices.

Septic Waste Systems

- Maintain septic tanks and fields in accordance with manufacturer's maintenance specifications.
- Divert surface water, perimeter drains and roof drains away from septic fields.
- Ensure no trees or plants with strong root systems are planted near septic fields and tanks.
- Limit the use of bleaches and chemical cleaners and ensure toxic substances are not placed in toilets.

Potable Water Sources

- Maintain water sources, pumps, wells and water systems.
- Perform routine flushing of the water systems as required.
- Collect water quality samples following Local Area Specifications. Ensure an accredited laboratory performs water quality tests for physical and chemical parameters. Report any issues with water quality immediately.
- Ensure drinking water advisory signing is provided, where necessary.

Invasive Plant Control

- Ensure all chemical control of noxious weeds/invasive plants is done under a valid Pest Management Plan and/or Permit from MoE.
- Contractors should coordinate manual/mechanical controls with other agencies carrying out herbicide work on invasive plants.
- Ensure all noxious weed/invasive plant materials are disposed of in accordance with the *Weed Control Act* Regulations and any local area protocols.
- When transporting noxious weeds/invasive plant or their seeds use a covered container.
- Ensure that any vehicle or equipment used in the removal of noxious weed/invasive plants is free of noxious weed/invasive plant and seed-containing materials when it leaves the work area.
- Prior to removing invasive plant species refer to methods outlined in the T.I.P.S. publications created by the Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia.
- Ensure that noxious weed/invasive plant removal or control methods that chemically or physically modify habitat are in accordance with the Integrated *Pest Management Act* & Regulations, Section 9 of the *Water Act*, and Section 35(1) of the *Fisheries Act*.

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Equipment Use

- Ensure any equipment used on site is well maintained and free of fluid leaks.
- Clean equipment and tools in a manner that will ensure any wash water generated is managed so as to prevent its release to watercourses or road drains.

Waste and Materials Containment

- Store any hazardous materials used in accordance with applicable regulations and ensure that deleterious substances are handled with care.
- Mix any hazardous materials to be used in a contained area to reduce the risk of contaminating soils or surface waters adjacent to the road surface.
- Ensure septic tanks are cleaned regularly, as required by use levels and maintenance requirements.
- When transporting noxious weeds/invasive plant or their seeds use a covered container.

Garbage and Waste Disposal

- Use secure garbage containers designed to be “bear-proof” or inaccessible to wildlife.
- Remove any accumulated garbage or litter regularly and dispose of at a designated landfill.
- Do not bury garbage onsite.
- Ensure composted waste is disposed of in accordance with applicable public health regulations.
- Dispose of composted waste only when it is completely decomposed.
- If compost is disposed of on-site, bury compost materials completely, near tree roots or other non-edible plants and away from watercourses and wells.
- Ensure all noxious weed/invasive plant materials are disposed of in accordance with the *Weed Control Act* Regulations and any local area protocols.



Key Information Sources

The documents and websites listed below are recommended resources for rest area and roadside facilities management. They can provide examples of existing protocols and management strategies, as well as additional information on specific operational BPs (e.g., erosion and sediment control techniques).

MoT Technical Circulars:

Roadside Development Landscape Policy – MoT Technical Circular T-8/91

This and all other MoT Technical Circulars are available at:

http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/publications/Circulars/technical_circulars.asp

Locally Developed BPs

(Provide any locally-developed BPs):

Local Area Specifications for Water Testing – Ministry of Transportation

http://www.th.gov.bc.ca/BCHighways/contracts/maintenance/Standards_Specs_Local_Area/sa07/LAS6_water_testing.pdf

Other Resources:

T.I.P.S.: Targeted Invasive Plant Solutions. Invasive Plant Council of British Columbia. 2007.

<http://www.invasiveplantcouncilbc.ca/resources/targeted-invasive-plant-solutions-tips>

BC Weed Control Act: Noxious Weeds in BC Website. Pest Management, Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.

<http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/cropprot/noxious.htm>

Water Quality Best Management Practices Compendium Website.

Environmental Protection Division, Ministry of Environment.

http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/wat/wq/nps/BMP_Compndium/nps_bmp.htm

Phoenix Composting Toilets

http://www.compostingtoilet.com/Public/Ap_Guide/Ap_Guide.htm#Maintain

Bearproof Litter Receptacles

<http://www.haulall.com/hidabag.htm>

Composting Toilets Technology Fact Sheet. United States Environmental Protection Agency.

<http://www.epa.gov/OW-OWM.html/mtb/comp.pdf>

Don't Attract Bears to Garbage Brochure. 1999. BC Ministry of Environment.

http://wlapwww.gov.bc.ca/wld/pub/beargarbage/garbg_br1.htm

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Checklist for Environmental Protection Requirements

- Is your proposed work considered a “routine” maintenance activity? If not, approvals or permits may be required. Contact your local municipal, provincial, or federal regulatory agency staff.
- Has this project been discussed with local environmental regulatory staff? In addition to the BP information presented, other site-specific conditions may apply.
- Have site-specific environmental protection requirements been identified? List below:
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____
 - _____