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Engine maintenance and repair – Safe Work Method Statement

Engine maintenance and repair activities can cause human hazards, result in spills and leaks that are costly to clean up, degrade water quality and threaten aquatic plant and animal life.

The following measures are recommended to prevent or minimise the adverse environmental impacts associated with engine service and repair activities.

General engine maintenance:

1. Absorption materials must be placed in bilge/under motors to trap oil/fuel leaks, particularly in vessels with automatic bilge pumps.
2. Engines should be maintained regularly to prevent oil and fuel leaks to the bilge.
3. A drip tray or groundsheet should be used under the engine to collect oil, grease, solvents or detergents.
4. When cleaning the drip tray or groundsheet, methods that do not result in water or soil contamination should be used.
5. Adequate supplies of absorbent materials and other rags should be kept for cleaning up small fuel spills.

Cleaning engine parts:

1. Parts cleaning and degreasing should take place in a properly designated wash bath or over catch pans located in a covered, sealed and bunded area that is graded to a collection pit or sump.
2. Where possible, engine parts should be cleaned with a brush rather than with solvents or aqueous degreasers such as alkaline or caustic soda.
3. Water-based or biodegradable strippers, cleaners or degreasers should be used wherever possible.

Replacing engine parts and oils:

1. Old or damaged batteries which are intended for recycling should be deposited in trays located under cover in the slipway area.
2. Mercury switches, thermostats and fluorescent tubes should be collected and packaged for disposal by a licensed chemical waste collector.
3. A funnel should be used when pouring fuel into drums or tanks and hand pumps should be used to remove fuel from drums rather than decanting them.
4. Bilge water should not be pumped into a waterway or onto soil if it contains high concentrations of hydrocarbons or other wastes including sanitary and detergent wastes.
5. All waste grease, sump oil, contaminated bilge water and waste oil filters should be collected for recycling or disposal by a licensed chemical waste collector.