



4.0 Construction and Decommissioning

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Applicability and Approach

This section provides additional, specific guidance on prevention and control of community health and safety impacts that may occur during new project development, at the end of the project life-cycle, or due to expansion or modification of existing project facilities. Cross referencing is made to various other sections of the General EHS Guidelines.

4.1 Environment{ TC "4.1 Environment" \f C \l "2" }

Noise and Vibration

During construction and decommissioning activities, noise and vibration may be caused by the operation of pile drivers, earth moving and excavation equipment, concrete mixers, cranes and the transportation of equipment, materials and people. Some recommended noise reduction and control strategies to consider in areas close to community areas include:

- Planning activities in consultation with local communities so that activities with the greatest potential to generate noise are

planned during periods of the day that will result in least disturbance

- Using noise control devices, such as temporary noise barriers and deflectors for impact and blasting activities, and exhaust muffling devices for combustion engines.
- Avoiding or minimizing project transportation through community areas

Soil Erosion

Soil erosion may be caused by exposure of soil surfaces to rain and wind during site clearing, earth moving, and excavation activities. The mobilization and transport of soil particles may, in turn, result in sedimentation of surface drainage networks, which may result in impacts to the quality of natural water systems and ultimately the biological systems that use these waters.

Recommended soil erosion and water system management approaches include:

Sediment mobilization and transport

- Reducing or preventing erosion by:
 - Scheduling to avoid heavy rainfall periods (i.e., during the dry season) to the extent practical
 - Contouring and minimizing length and steepness of slopes
 - Mulching to stabilize exposed areas
 - Re-vegetating areas promptly
 - Designing channels and ditches for post-construction flows
 - Lining steep channel and slopes (e.g. use jute matting)
- Reducing or preventing off-site sediment transport through use of settlement ponds, silt fences, and water treatment, and modifying or suspending activities during extreme rainfall and high winds to the extent practical.

Clean runoff management

- Segregating or diverting clean water runoff to prevent it mixing with water containing a high solids content, to minimize the volume of water to be treated prior to release

Road design

- Limiting access road gradients to reduce runoff-induced erosion
- Providing adequate road drainage based on road width, surface material, compaction, and maintenance

Disturbance to water bodies

- Depending on the potential for adverse impacts, installing free-spanning structures (e.g., single span bridges) for road watercourse crossings
- Restricting the duration and timing of in-stream activities to lower low periods, and avoiding periods critical to biological cycles of valued flora and fauna (e.g., migration, spawning, etc.)
- For in-stream works, using isolation techniques such as berming or diversion during construction to limit the exposure of disturbed sediments to moving water
- Consider using trenchless technology for pipeline crossings (e.g., suspended crossings) or installation by directional drilling

Structural (slope) stability

- Providing effective short term measures for slope stabilization, sediment control and subsidence control until long term measures for the operational phase can be implemented
- Providing adequate drainage systems to minimize and control infiltration

Air Quality

Construction and decommissioning activities may generate emission of fugitive dust caused by a combination of on-site excavation and movement of earth materials, contact of construction machinery with bare soil, and exposure of bare soil and soil piles to wind. A secondary source of emissions may include exhaust from diesel engines of earth moving equipment, as well as from open burning of solid waste on-site. Techniques to consider for the reduction and control of air emissions from construction and decommissioning sites include:

- Minimizing dust from material handling sources, such as conveyors and bins, by using covers and/or control equipment (water suppression, bag house, or cyclone)
- Minimizing dust from open area sources, including storage piles, by using control measures such as installing enclosures and covers, and increasing the moisture content
- Dust suppression techniques should be implemented, such as applying water or non-toxic chemicals to minimize dust from vehicle movements
- Selectively removing potential hazardous air pollutants, such as asbestos, from existing infrastructure prior to demolition
- Managing emissions from mobile sources according to Section 1.1
- Avoiding open burning of solid (refer to solid waste management guidance in Section 1.6)

Solid Waste

Non-hazardous solid waste generated at construction and decommissioning sites includes excess fill materials from grading and excavation activities, scrap wood and metals, and small concrete spills. Other non-hazardous solid wastes include office, kitchen, and dormitory wastes when these types of operations are part of construction project activities. *Hazardous solid waste* includes contaminated soils, which could potentially be encountered on-site due to previous land use activities, or small

amounts of machinery maintenance materials, such as oily rags, used oil filters, and used oil, as well as spill cleanup materials from oil and fuel spills. Techniques for preventing and controlling non-hazardous and hazardous construction site solid waste include those already discussed in Section 1.6.

Hazardous Materials

Construction and decommissioning activities may pose the potential for release of petroleum based products, such as lubricants, hydraulic fluids, or fuels during their storage, transfer, or use in equipment. These materials may also be encountered during decommissioning activities in building components or industrial process equipment. Techniques for prevention, minimization, and control of these impacts include:

- Providing adequate secondary containment for fuel storage tanks and for the temporary storage of other fluids such as lubricating oils and hydraulic fluids,
- Using impervious surfaces for refueling areas and other fluid transfer areas
- Training workers on the correct transfer and handling of fuels and chemicals and the response to spills
- Providing portable spill containment and cleanup equipment on site and training in the equipment deployment
- Assessing the contents of hazardous materials and petroleum-based products in building systems (e.g. PCB containing electrical equipment, asbestos-containing building materials) and process equipment and removing them prior to initiation of decommissioning activities, and managing their treatment and disposal according to Sections 1.5 and 1.6 on Hazardous Materials and Hazardous Waste Management, respectively
- Assessing the presence of hazardous substances in or on building materials (e.g., polychlorinated biphenyls, asbestos-containing flooring or insulation) and decontaminating or properly managing contaminated building materials

Wastewater Discharges

Construction and decommissioning activities may include the generation of sanitary wastewater discharges in varying quantities depending on the number of workers involved. Adequate portable or permanent sanitation facilities serving all workers should be provided at all construction sites. Sanitary wastewater in construction and other sites should be managed as described in Section 1.3.

Contaminated Land

Land contamination may be encountered in sites under construction or decommissioning due to known or unknown historical releases of hazardous materials or oil, or due to the presence of abandoned infrastructure formerly used to store or handle these materials, including underground storage tanks. Actions necessary to manage the risk from contaminated land will depend on factors such as the level and location of contamination, the type and risks of the contaminated media, and the intended land use. However, a basic management strategy should include:

- Managing contaminated media with the objective of protecting the safety and health of occupants of the site, the surrounding community, and the environment post construction or post decommissioning
- Understanding the historical use of the land with regard to the potential presence of hazardous materials or oil prior to initiation of construction or decommissioning activities
- Preparing plans and procedures to respond to the discovery of contaminated media to minimize or reduce the risk to health, safety, and the environment consistent with the approach for Contaminated Land in Section 1.6
- Preparation of a management plan to manage obsolete, abandoned, hazardous materials or oil consistent with the approach to hazardous waste management described in Section 1.6.

Successful implementation of any management strategy may require identification and cooperation with whoever is responsible and liable for the contamination.

4.2 Occupational Health and Safety

Over-exertion

Over-exertion, and ergonomic injuries and illnesses, such as repetitive motion, over-exertion, and manual handling, are among the most common causes of injuries in construction and decommissioning sites. Recommendations for their prevention and control include:

- Training of workers in lifting and materials handling techniques in construction and decommissioning projects, including the placement of weight limits above which mechanical assists or two-person lifts are necessary
- Planning work site layout to minimize the need for manual transfer of heavy loads
- Selecting tools and designing work stations that reduce force requirements and holding times, and which promote improved postures, including, where applicable, user adjustable work stations
- Implementing administrative controls into work processes, such as job rotations and rest or stretch breaks

Slips and Falls

Slips and falls on the same elevation associated with poor housekeeping, such as excessive waste debris, loose construction materials, liquid spills, and uncontrolled use of electrical cords and ropes on the ground, are also among the most frequent cause of lost time accidents at construction and decommissioning sites.

Recommended methods for the prevention of slips and falls from, or on, the same elevation include:

- Implementing good house-keeping practices, such as the sorting and placing loose construction materials or demolition debris in established areas away from foot paths
- Cleaning up excessive waste debris and liquid spills regularly
- Locating electrical cords and ropes in common areas and marked corridors
- Use of slip retardant footwear

Work in Heights

Falls from elevation associated with working with ladders, scaffolding, and partially built or demolished structures are among the most common cause of fatal or permanent disabling injury at construction or decommissioning sites. If fall hazards exist, a fall protection plan should be in place which includes one or more of the following aspects, depending on the nature of the fall hazard⁹⁵:

- Training and use of temporary fall prevention devices, such as rails or other barriers able to support a weight of 200 pounds, when working at heights equal or greater than two meters or at any height if the risk includes falling into operating machinery, into water or other liquid, into hazardous substances, or through an opening in a work surface
- Training and use of personal fall arrest systems, such as full body harnesses and energy absorbing lanyards able to support 5000 pounds (also described in this section in Working at Heights above), as well as fall rescue procedures to deal with workers whose fall has been successfully arrested. The tie in point of the fall arresting system should also be able to support 5000 pounds
- Use of control zones and safety monitoring systems to warn workers of their proximity to fall hazard zones, as well as

⁹⁵ Additional information on identification of fall hazards and design of protection systems can be found in the United States Occupational Health and Safety Administration's (US OSHA) web site: <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/fallprotection/index.html>

securing, marking, and labeling covers for openings in floors, roofs, or walking surfaces

Struck By Objects

Construction and demolition activities may pose significant hazards related to the potential fall of materials or tools, as well as ejection of solid particles from abrasive or other types of power tools which can result in injury to the head, eyes, and extremities. Techniques for the prevention and control of these hazards include:

- Using a designated and restricted waste drop or discharge zones, and/or a chute for safe movement of wastes from upper to lower levels
- Conducting sawing, cutting, grinding, sanding, chipping or chiseling with proper guards and anchoring as applicable
- Maintaining clear traffic ways to avoid driving of heavy equipment over loose scrap
- Use of temporary fall protection measures in scaffolds and out edges of elevated work surfaces, such as hand rails and toe boards to prevent materials from being dislodged
- Evacuating work areas during blasting operations, and using blast mats or other means of deflection to minimize fly rock or ejection of demolition debris if work is conducted in proximity to people or structures
- Wearing appropriate PPE, such as safety glasses with side shields, face shields, hard hats, and safety shoes

Moving Machinery

Vehicle traffic and use of lifting equipment in the movement of machinery and materials on a construction site may pose temporary hazards, such as physical contact, spills, dust, emissions, and noise. Heavy equipment operators have limited fields of view close to their equipment and may not see pedestrians close to the vehicle. Center-articulated vehicles create a significant impact or crush hazard zone on the outboard side of

a turn while moving. Techniques for the prevention and control of these impacts include:

- Planning and segregating the location of vehicle traffic, machine operation, and walking areas, and controlling vehicle traffic through the use of one-way traffic routes, establishment of speed limits, and on-site trained flag-people wearing high-visibility vests or outer clothing covering to direct traffic
- Ensuring the visibility of personnel through their use of high visibility vests when working in or walking through heavy equipment operating areas, and training of workers to verify eye contact with equipment operators before approaching the operating vehicle
- Ensuring moving equipment is outfitted with audible back-up alarms
- Using inspected and well-maintained lifting devices that are appropriate for the load, such as cranes, and securing loads when lifting them to higher job-site elevations.

Dust

- Dust suppression techniques should be implemented, such as applying water or non-toxic chemicals to minimize dust from vehicle movements
- PPE, such as dusk masks, should be used where dust levels are excessive

Confined Spaces and Excavations

Examples of confined spaces that may be present in construction or demolition sites include: silos, vats, hoppers, utility vaults, tanks, sewers, pipes, and access shafts. Ditches and trenches may also be considered a confined space when access or egress is limited. In addition to the guidance provided in Section 2.8 the occupational hazards associated with confined spaces and excavations in construction and decommissioning sites should be prevented according to the following recommendations:

- Controlling site-specific factors which may contribute to excavation slope instability including, for example, the use of excavation dewatering, side-walls support, and slope gradient adjustments that eliminate or minimize the risk of collapse, entrapment, or drowning
- Providing safe means of access and egress from excavations, such as graded slopes, graded access route, or stairs and ladders
- Avoiding the operation of combustion equipment for prolonged periods inside excavations areas where other workers are required to enter unless the area is actively ventilated

Other Site Hazards

Construction and decommissioning sites may pose a risk of exposure to dust, chemicals, hazardous or flammable materials, and wastes in a combination of liquid, solid, or gaseous forms, which should be prevented through the implementation of project-specific plans and other applicable management practices, including:

- Use of specially trained personnel to identify and remove waste materials from tanks, vessels, processing equipment or contaminated land as a first step in decommissioning activities to allow for safe excavation, construction, dismantling or demolition
- Use of specially trained personnel to identify and selectively remove potentially hazardous materials in building elements prior to dismantling or demolition including, for example, insulation or structural elements containing asbestos and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs), electrical components containing mercury⁹⁶
- Use of waste-specific PPE based on the results of an occupational health and safety assessment, including

respirators, clothing/protective suits, gloves and eye protection

4.3 Community Health and Safety { TC "4.3 Community Health and Safety" \f C \l "2" }

General Site Hazards

Projects should implement risk management strategies to protect the community from physical, chemical, or other hazards associated with sites under construction and decommissioning. Risks may arise from inadvertent or intentional trespassing, including potential contact with hazardous materials, contaminated soils and other environmental media, buildings that are vacant or under construction, or excavations and structures which may pose falling and entrapment hazards. Risk management strategies may include:

- Restricting access to the site, through a combination of institutional and administrative controls, with a focus on high risk structures or areas depending on site-specific situations, including fencing, signage, and communication of risks to the local community
- Removing hazardous conditions on construction sites that cannot be controlled affectively with site access restrictions, such as covering openings to small confined spaces, ensuring means of escape for larger openings such as trenches or excavations, or locked storage of hazardous materials

Disease Prevention

Increased incidence of communicable and vector-borne diseases attributable to construction activities represents a potentially serious health threat to project personnel and residents of local communities. Recommendations for the prevention and control of communicable and vector-borne diseases also applicable to

⁹⁶ Additional information on the management and removal of asbestos containing building materials can be found in ASTM Standard E2356 and E1368

construction phase activities are provided in Section 3.6 (Disease Prevention).

Traffic Safety

Construction activities may result in a significant increase in movement of heavy vehicles for the transport of construction materials and equipment increasing the risk of traffic-related accidents and injuries to workers and local communities. The incidence of road accidents involving project vehicles during construction should be minimized through a combination of education and awareness-raising, and the adoption of procedures described in Section 3.4 (Traffic Safety).