



Pollution Prevention & Oil and Water Separator

✓ Checklist



Background

This checklist serves as a resource for implementing the best management practices when utilizing an oil and water separator (OWS). The steps outlined in this list will preserve the life of an OWS and maintain its efficiency, reducing the likelihood of environmental damage, fines, inefficiency, and waste. Local Publicly Owned Treatment Works (POTWs) may have pretreatment or discharge requirements that are more restrictive than IDEM standards. *Facilities should verify applicable local limits and any pretreatment equipment required by the POTW, such as oil-water separators.*

Best Management Practices

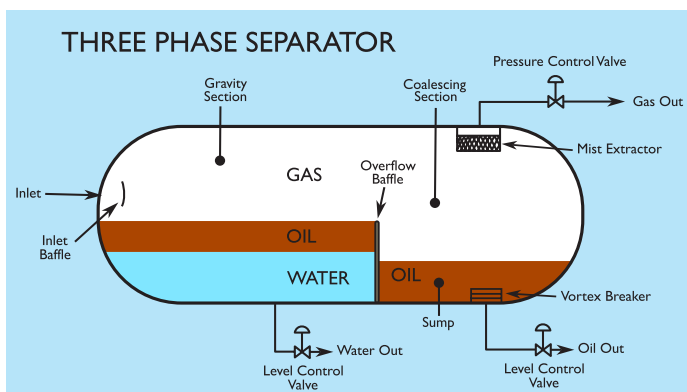
Identify

Daily Check List

- ☐ No leaks present around the OWS
- ☐ No leaks present at inlet and outlet sections of OWS

Weekly Check List

- ☐ Daily checks have been completed
- ☐ No oily substances present at outlet of OWS
- ☐ No oily or unauthorized substances in or near drains
- ☐ No leaks present at joints and connecting sections of OWS



Quarterly Check List

- ☐ Daily and weekly checks have been completed
- ☐ Check oil and sludge layers inside of tank using measuring stick

To perform this measurement, insert the measuring stick or sludge judge vertically into the separator through the inspection port, withdraw it, and read the distinct sludge (bottom) and oil (top) layers from the sample. These thickness values will be used in the OWS calculator.

- ☐ Use IDEM's OWS calculator to calculate the amount of sludge, and or oil present in the tank
- ☐ If any of the following are true, call your preferred cleaning professionals to empty and clean the tank;
 - Sludge accumulates to 20% of the wetted height of the separator compartment
 - Oil accumulates to 5% of the wetted height of the separator compartment
 - 75% of the retention capacity of the OWS is filled
- ☐ Ensure that connecting pads or mats are not fully saturated

Yearly Check List

- ☐ Daily, weekly, and quarterly checks have been completed
- ☐ The tank has been cleaned at least once this year
- ☐ Filters, pads, mats, drains and other hardware have been replaced if needed

The actions outlined do not replace or ensure compliance with regulatory standards set by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management (IDEM). If regulatory or compliance assistance is needed, refer to IDEM's **Compliance and Technical Assistance Program (CTAP)**.

Repair

- ☐ No repairs are needed to the OWS

If repairs are needed:

- ☐ Proper technicians have been called
- ☐ Connected processes have been halted
- ☐ Leak mitigation strategies have been taken, such as placing down mats or buckets to catch spills
- ☐ Proper safety precautions have been taken, such as cautionary signage or PPE
- ☐ Employees are informed of safety and environmental procedures

Prevent

- ☐ Incompatible or concentrated wastes such as fuels, solvents, detergents, coolants, and paints are not discharged to the OWS, as these materials can damage the separator or violate POTW discharge limits.
- ☐ Contaminated or dirty hardware, tools, or supplies are not placed in or near water
- ☐ Employees are aware of proper precautions and preventative measures concerning the OWS
- ☐ Concentrated levels of contaminant are not entering the OWS

 Remember that OWSs are intended for incidental oil removal only; concentrated waste streams or bulk petroleum products should never be routed to the separator.

Any brand names or mention of specific commercial products or services in examples does not imply endorsement by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management.



Close up image of a smaller scale OWS system.



Large scale OWS system.

Resources

IDEM's Compliance and Technical Assistance Program (CTAP) is a free and confidential service available to all Indiana businesses and regulated entities for on-site and remote assistance. Contact **CTAP** at (317) 232-8172 or use the [CTAP Portal](#) to submit a request for confidential regulatory and technical assistance. For more information, visit idem.IN.gov/CTAP.

For more information and resources on oil and water separators, pollution prevention strategies, or Peer Matching, visit idem.IN.gov/prevention.

