

FARMING & WATER SCOTLAND



Maintaining Slurry Storage Systems

It is important to carry out routine inspections and annual maintenance on your slurry storage systems to ensure they remain impermeable and free from any structural defects.

Keep areas around slurry stores, free of soil, debris and vegetation to allow for any leakage to be identified and repaired promptly. Trees and shrubs should not be allowed to establish within rooting distance of lagoons and above ground stores. Most manufacturers will provide details of recommended maintenance which will ensure that the product is fit for use during the expected lifespan. Things to consider are:

- Checking and maintaining all valves, greasing these annually when the store is empty.
- Visually inspecting the tank; metal towers can show corrosion at the point where sheets meet and join; degradation of the mastic between sheets can cause failure, resulting in a spill. Rust spots or electrolytic corrosion can be seen on metal stores whereas cracks in concrete structures can indicate a weakness and should be investigated further to prevent a catastrophic failure.
- Check for tightness and corrosion in the hoops, cables and straps for post-tensioned concrete above ground stores.
- Check and maintain couplings and fixings around side stirrers and outlet pipes for leakage.
- Concrete floors and aprons should be inspected for cracks or holes which will need repaired immediately to prevent further erosion or structural failure.
- All slurry lagoon liners should be inspected annually when the store is empty and any repairs or replacements carried out before next use.
- Slurry lagoon leak detection systems should be regularly inspected and all chambers and pipes kept clear of debris.
- Earth banks should be checked for any subsidence.
- Pest control around lagoons will reduce the risk of liner damage from rodents and burrowing mammals.