



BUDDY RHODES THE CONCRETE GODFATHER

Buddy standing on his wet-polishing platform with three water settling drums at left.

SLUDGE IS THE BUG I'M THINKING OF

SLUDGE is a famously problematic sticking point for any finished concrete pre-caster with a small shop - or any size shop for that matter. So I have been working for years on solutions for my wash-out area. After all, whether we polish wet or dry, we're always needing to clean our hands, tools and mix buckets. But we can't just send concrete sludge down the drain. Where and how can we deal with the sludge water?

In my current 1500 sq. ft shop I have two systems.

1) A settling system of three fifty-five gallon drums that filter the water by a simple method. The water goes first into the right-hand drum and rises to the top where a pipe has been placed to drain into the next drum and then into the third. By the time the water gets to the third drum most of the silt has settled into the first two. It can then run down the drain or out into the yard for gray water uses. If you're calling yourself a 'green' shop, you can brag about this



method. Water your plants with your gray water! Or use the water from the third drum to recycle into your polishing system.

2) My other system is basically a pallet jack-able 4x8 foot platform that can be either folk-lifted into a shelving unit or moved around the shop with a pallet jack. You can also make a couple and gang them together for a much larger work area. If you put up plywood sides, you have an enclosed polishing area. 🐾

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HERE IS A MATERIALS LIST:

Pallet-

- 1-4' x 8' x 3/4" Plywood
- 5-6" x 96" x 3/4" Plywood
- 6-2" x 4" x 48"

Frame-

- 2-2" x 6" x 96"
- 2-2" x 6" x 45"

Bridge Ribs-

- 3-2" x 6" x 44-1/2"

Deck Planks-

- 5-2" x 8" x 96"

5' x 10' Thick Plastic Sheet

Plus plywood back and sidewalls to collect overspray.

•Start with making a 4x8 pallet using 3/4" thick plywood and 2x4s. Then build a 2"x6" frame and secure it to the pallet.

•Drape a thick sheet of plastic over the frame and gently place the "bridge ribs" into the covered frame. Do not screw the ribs in place so the plastic remains whole (not holed).

•Next screw the 2"x8" decking planks into the frame and ribs.

•Notch on either end of the first 2x8 plank an area where an aquarium pump can be placed to pump out the dirty water into the first drum of your three drum settling system.

•When the time comes and the sludge is just too much you can remove the 2x8 planks and bridge ribs. Roll up the plastic sheeting and take it to the dump.

•A good final tip is to mix the sludge with gray Portland cement to congeal the sludge.



