WORKING MATERIAL 2.11 · CHAPTER 2 — THE OPERATIONAL PERSPECTIVE (SECTIONS B, C AND D) · SETTING: EL NIDO, PALAWAN, PHILIPPINES

Wastewater, Harmful Substances and Pollution

Source: Francesco Dore, The Helm and the Lens, Volume 7a — GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0, subchapter 2.11 (book page 331)

GUIDING QUESTION

Most of what a hotel releases into its surroundings leaves through a pipe, a drain, a loudspeaker or a lamp, and almost none of it is seen by the guest who caused it. The standard asks a hotel to know where each of these pathways ends. What changes when an owner follows the water, the chemicals and the noise beyond the property line?

1 · Verification Pact: market claims against the standard

Copied from the book. The last column is for your property: what holds here, and how you know it.

What is claimed	Binding?	What actually holds	In our property
A hotel connected to the municipal sewer has nothing to do under D5	Only partially true	Municipal systems are an accepted route, but D5.2 still asks for documented evidence of safe discharge	
Greywater is clean enough to go straight to the garden	No	The criterion includes greywater; reuse is allowed only when it meets safe, best-practice quality	
The standard requires every hotel to recycle greywater	No	D5.3 asks for water-reuse initiatives where feasible	
Safety data sheets are needed only for industrial chemicals	No	The guidelines name cleaning, laundry, pool and landscaping chemicals, with sheets near points of use	
The standard requires eco-labelled products only	No	D7.3 asks for targets to increase certified alternatives when available, with progress reviewed	
Lighting is a matter of atmosphere, not pollution	No	D8.5 requires steps to minimise light pollution, particularly in or near coastal and sensitive areas	
The standard bans smoking on the premises	No	D8.6 allows designated outdoor areas or, where legally allowed, separated and ventilated indoor rooms	

2 · Common mistakes — a self-check

Tick each mistake you recognise in your own property, and note where it shows.

☐ Treating an on-site treatment system as maintenance-free because the installer said so.

☐ Sending laundry or kitchen greywater to the garden without knowing what it carries.

☐ Decanting chemicals into unlabelled bottles and keeping no safety data sheets.

☐ Forgetting the garden shed, the pool room and the paint store when listing chemicals.

☐ Moving an outlet out of sight instead of treating and testing what leaves it.

☐ Lighting beaches, cliffs and gardens all night because it photographs well.

☐ Measuring noise only in guest complaints and never asking the neighbours.

☐ Filing only favourable test results, so that the record can never show a problem being solved.

3 · A Checklist for Following What Leaves the Property

The book's checklist, with a column for your own answer.

Question	Why it matters	Our answer
Where does every wastewater and greywater line end, and when was each last tested?	D5.2 asks for documented evidence of safe discharge	
Do we hold a current inventory and data sheet for every chemical, including those in the garden?	D7.1 and its guideline cover landscaping and pool chemicals	
Which products have certified alternatives, and what is our target for replacing them?	D7.3 asks for targets and regular review of progress	
Have we listed our pollution sources by location, including noise, light, runoff and erosion?	D8.1 asks for sources identified in their context	
Do neighbours and guests have a way to tell us what they notice?	The D8 guidelines include stakeholder feedback in reviews	
Have technical and housekeeping staff been trained on the systems and products they handle?	D5.4 and D7.5 require training	

4 · What would show this is working

Questions drawn from the subchapter's reading of the standard and its practical application. Indicator references point to the GSTC Hotel Standard v4.0; where the evidence lives is this book's practice, not a requirement of the standard.

Question	Where the evidence lives	Seen?
Do we comply with applicable wastewater law and document safe discharge (D5.1, D5.2)?	Test results filed by date; legal register entry	☐
Do technical staff receive wastewater training (D5.4)?	Training records	☐
Is there an updated inventory with Safety Data Sheets for all harmful substances (D7.1)?	Chemical inventory; sheets at points of use	☐
Is chemical use monitored, with targets for certified alternatives (D7.2, D7.3)?	Monthly usage record; substitution targets	☐
Are pollution sources identified, controlled and monitored, including noise and light (D8.1–D8.5)?	Pollution source list and monitoring log	☐

> *What this sheet is not: the GSTC Hotel Standard does not prescribe this form. It is a working aid drawn from the book; the standard's criteria, indicators and guidelines govern the real case. Independent material; not affiliated with or endorsed by the GSTC. The standard's own text at www.gstc.org prevails.*