



## Description

Stormwater runoff from building and grounds maintenance activities can be contaminated with toxic hydrocarbons in solvents, fertilizers and pesticides, suspended solids, heavy metals, abnormal pH, and oils and greases. Utilizing the protocols in this fact sheet will prevent or reduce the discharge of pollutants to stormwater from building and grounds maintenance activities by washing and cleaning up with as little water as possible, following good landscape management practices, preventing and cleaning up spills immediately, keeping debris from entering the storm drains, and maintaining the stormwater collection system.

## Approach

Reduce potential for pollutant discharge through source control pollution prevention and BMP implementation. Successful implementation depends on effective training of employees on applicable BMPs and general pollution prevention strategies and objectives.

## Pollution Prevention

- Switch to non-toxic chemicals for maintenance when possible.
- Choose cleaning agents that can be recycled.
- Encourage proper lawn management and landscaping, including use of native vegetation.

## Objectives

- Cover
- Contain
- Educate
- Reduce/Minimize
- Product Substitution

## Targeted Constituents

Sediment	✓
Nutrients	✓
Trash	
Metals	✓
Bacteria	✓
Oil and Grease	
Organics	



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- Encourage use of Integrated Pest Management techniques for pest control.
- Encourage proper onsite recycling of yard trimmings.
- Recycle residual paints, solvents, lumber, and other material as much as possible.

## ***Suggested Protocols***

### *Pressure Washing of Buildings, Rooftops, and Other Large Objects*

- In situations where soaps or detergents are used and the surrounding area is paved, pressure washers must use a water collection device that enables collection of wash water and associated solids. A sump pump, wet vacuum or similarly effective device must be used to collect the runoff and loose materials. The collected runoff and solids must be disposed of properly.
- If soaps or detergents are not used, and the surrounding area is paved, wash runoff does not have to be collected but must be screened. Pressure washers must use filter fabric or some other type of screen on the ground and/or in the catch basin to trap the particles in wash water runoff.
- If you are pressure washing on a grassed area (with or without soap), runoff must be dispersed as sheet flow as much as possible, rather than as a concentrated stream. The wash runoff must remain on the grass and not drain to pavement.

### *Landscaping Activities*

- Dispose of grass clippings, leaves, sticks, or other collected vegetation as garbage, or by composting. Do not dispose of collected vegetation into waterways or storm drainage systems.
- Use mulch or other erosion control measures on exposed soils.

### *Building Repair, Remodeling, and Construction*

- Do not dump any toxic substance or liquid waste on the pavement, the ground, or toward a storm drain.
- Use ground or drop cloths underneath outdoor painting, scraping, and sandblasting work, and properly dispose of collected material daily.
- Use a ground cloth or oversized tub for activities such as paint mixing and tool cleaning.
- Clean paintbrushes and tools covered with water-based paints in sinks connected to sanitary sewers or in portable containers that can be dumped into a sanitary sewer drain. Brushes and tools covered with non-water-based paints, finishes, or other materials must be cleaned in a manner that enables collection of used solvents (e.g., paint thinner, turpentine, etc.) for recycling or proper disposal.
- Use a storm drain cover, filter fabric, or similarly effective runoff control mechanism if dust, grit, wash water, or other pollutants may escape the work area and enter a catch basin. This is particularly necessary on rainy days. The containment device(s) must be in place at the beginning of the work day, and accumulated dirty runoff and solids must be collected and disposed of before removing the containment device(s) at the end of the work day.

- If you need to de-water an excavation site, you may need to filter the water before discharging to a catch basin or off-site. If directed off-site, you should direct the water through hay bales and filter fabric or use other sediment filters or traps.
- Store toxic material under cover during precipitation events and when not in use. A cover would include tarps or other temporary cover material.

### *Mowing, Trimming, and Planting*

- Dispose of leaves, sticks, or other collected vegetation as garbage, by composting or at a permitted landfill. Do not dispose of collected vegetation into waterways or storm drainage systems.
- Use mulch or other erosion control measures when soils are exposed.
- Place temporarily stockpiled material away from watercourses and drain inlets, and berm or cover stockpiles to prevent material releases to the storm drain system.
- Consider an alternative approach when bailing out muddy water: do not put it in the storm drain; pour over landscaped areas.
- Use hand weeding where practical.

### *Fertilizer and Pesticide Management*

- Follow all federal, state, and local laws and regulations governing the use, storage, and disposal of fertilizers and pesticides and training of applicators and pest control advisors.
- Use less toxic pesticides that will do the job when applicable. Avoid use of copper-based pesticides if possible.
- Do not use pesticides if rain is expected.
- Do not mix or prepare pesticides for application near storm drains.
- Use the minimum amount needed for the job.
- Calibrate fertilizer distributors to avoid excessive application.
- Employ techniques to minimize off-target application (e.g., spray drift) of pesticides, including consideration of alternative application techniques.
- Apply pesticides only when wind speeds are low.
- Fertilizers should be worked into the soil rather than dumped or broadcast onto the surface.
- Irrigate slowly to prevent runoff and then only as much as is needed.
- Clean pavement and sidewalk if fertilizer is spilled on these surfaces before applying irrigation water.
- Dispose of empty pesticide containers according to the instructions on the container label.

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- Use up the pesticides. Rinse containers, and use rinse water as product. Dispose of unused pesticide as hazardous waste.
- Implement storage requirements for pesticide products with guidance from the local fire department and County Agricultural Commissioner. Provide secondary containment for pesticides.

## *Inspection*

- Inspect irrigation system periodically to ensure that the right amount of water is being applied and that excessive runoff is not occurring. Minimize excess watering and repair leaks in the irrigation system as soon as they are observed.

## *Training*

- Educate and train employees on pesticide use and in pesticide application techniques to prevent pollution.
- Train employees and contractors in proper techniques for spill containment and cleanup.
- Be sure the frequency of training takes into account the complexity of the operations and the nature of the staff.

## *Spill Response and Prevention*

- Keep your Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure (SPCC) Plan up-to-date.
- Place a stockpile of spill cleanup materials, such as brooms, dustpans, and vacuum sweepers (if desired) near the storage area where it will be readily accessible.
- Have employees trained in spill containment and cleanup present during the loading/unloading of dangerous wastes, liquid chemicals, or other materials.
- Familiarize employees with the Spill Prevention Control and Countermeasure Plan.
- Clean up spills immediately.

## *Other Considerations*

Alternative pest/weed controls may not be available, suitable, or effective in many cases.

## **Requirements**

### *Costs*

- Cost will vary depending on the type and size of facility.
- Overall costs should be low in comparison to other BMPs.

### *Maintenance*

Sweep paved areas regularly to collect loose particles. Wipe up spills with rags and other absorbent material immediately, do not hose down the area to a storm drain.

## Supplemental Information

### *Further Detail of the BMP*

#### *Fire Sprinkler Line Flushing*

Building fire sprinkler line flushing may be a source of non-stormwater runoff pollution. The water entering the system is usually potable water, though in some areas it may be non-potable reclaimed wastewater. There are subsequent factors that may drastically reduce the quality of the water in such systems. Black iron pipe is usually used since it is cheaper than potable piping, but it is subject to rusting and results in lower quality water. Initially, the black iron pipe has an oil coating to protect it from rusting between manufacture and installation; this will contaminate the water from the first flush but not from subsequent flushes. Nitrates, poly-phosphates and other corrosion inhibitors, as well as fire suppressants and antifreeze may be added to the sprinkler water system. Water generally remains in the sprinkler system a long time (typically a year) and between flushes may accumulate iron, manganese, lead, copper, nickel, and zinc. The water generally becomes anoxic and contains living and dead bacteria and breakdown products from chlorination. This may result in a significant BOD problem and the water often smells. Consequently dispose fire sprinkler line flush water into the sanitary sewer. Do not allow discharge to storm drain or infiltration due to potential high levels of pollutants in fire sprinkler line water.

## References and Resources

California's Nonpoint Source Program Plan <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/nps/index.html>

Clark County Storm Water Pollution Control Manual  
<http://www.co.clark.wa.us/pubworks/bmpman.pdf>

King County Storm Water Pollution Control Manual <http://dnr.metrokc.gov/wlr/dss/spcm.htm>

Mobile Cleaners Pilot Program: Final Report. 1997. Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association (BASMAA). <http://www.basmaa.org/>

Pollution from Surface Cleaning Folder. 1996. Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association (BASMAA). <http://www.basmaa.org/>

Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program <http://www.scvurppp.org>

The Storm Water Managers Resource Center <http://www.stormwatercenter.net/>

