

Automotive and Related Industries... How to Prevent Water & Storm Sewer Pollution

Best Management Practices For:

Gas Stations
Auto Repair Shops
Mechanics
Auto Detailers
Auto Dealerships
Collision & Paint Shops
Car rental Agencies
Car Wash Shops
Tire Shops
Auto Salvage

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Stormwater Pollution

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that does not soak into the ground. It flows from rooftops, over paved areas, bare soil, and sloped lawns. As it flows, stormwater runoff collects and transports soil, animal waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizers, oil and grease, debris and other potential pollutants.

What is the Problem?

Rain and snowmelt wash pollutants from streets, construction sites, and land into storm sewers and ditches. Eventually, the storm sewers and ditches empty the polluted stormwater directly into streams and rivers with no treatment. This is known as stormwater pollution. Polluted stormwater degrades our lakes, rivers, wetlands and other waterways. Nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen can cause the overgrowth of algae resulting in oxygen depletion in waterways. Toxic substances from motor vehicles and careless application of pesticides and fertilizers threaten water quality and can kill fish and other aquatic life. Bacteria from animal wastes and improper connections to storm sewer systems can make lakes and waterways unsafe for wading, swimming and fish consumption. Eroded soil is a pollutant as well. It clouds the waterway and interferes with the habitat of fish and plant life. Fortunately, stormwater pollution can be prevented or minimized by implementing Best Management Practices which are procedures or activities that reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater.

How to Prevent Pollution from Automotive & Related Industries

Pollutants from automotive-related activities that enter municipal storm drain systems will harm aquatic life and impair our drinking water supplies. Floating materials, such as debris and automotive fluids, also pollute our lakes and streams and reduce the natural beauty of our waterways. This results in a negative impact on the aesthetics of our natural resources and on tourism/recreation opportunities.

Best Management Practices

Employee training is essential to reinforce proper disposal practices.

Minimize use of water to clean floors. A damp mop or wet vac should be used instead.

Use kitty litter to clean up an oil spill and dispose of as hazardous waste.

Tanks, pumps, fittings, pipes and containers should be inspected routinely for integrity and leaks.

Never hose down bays into storm drains. Contain wash water and dispose of through sanitary sewer.

Recycle grease and oil. DON'T pour into sinks, floor drains or parking lots.

Identify the nearest storm drain and keep fluids away from it.

Use high volume, low pressure spray paint equipment to achieve high transfer efficiency.

Dispose of solvent only when it loses its effectiveness, not just because it looks dirty.

Use mechanical stripping methods instead of paint removers. Give leftover paint to customers or donate to trade schools.

Combine transmission and brake fluid. It is not cost effective to recycle these separately.

Keep used oil separate from parts cleaning solvents, antifreeze and fuel.

Recycle oil, antifreeze, tires and batteries.

Fit all storage tanks with spill containment and overfill prevention system.

Never pour liquids or dry materials down a storm drain.

Use drip pans to capture fluids. Use absorbent cleaning agents instead of water to clean work areas.

Collect bulk grease in containers and contact a firm to recycle waste into a useful by-product.

Flush parts with dirty solvent first and then rinse clean with virgin solvent.

Pour wash water into a janitorial sink. NOT outside in a parking lot, alley or sidewalk/street.

To prevent storm water discharge, avoid working in outdoor areas. If this isn't possible, grade, pave or berm outdoor areas to collect discharge in a sanitary sewer drain.

Eliminate the use of chlorinated solvents, which are highly toxic and hard to dispose of.

Use detergents or water based parts cleaners.

Capture crusher fluids to prevent spillage. Do not allow fluids to drain into the ground.

Created and distributed as part of our stormwater management program to protect our waterways and enhance our quality of life. Our goal is to identify existing resources and develop programs to reduce the negative impacts of stormwater pollution.

This is part of the implementation of a stormwater management program that complies with New York State's Stormwater regulations. -2/2009