

Compliance Assistance Bulletin

News You Can Use

Stormwater Compliance

Purpose

The purpose of this Compliance Assistance Bulletin is to help individuals understand how to comply with local stormwater ordinance requirements through responsible management of pollutants associated with common activities.

The Basics

Stormwater regulations include two basic requirements:

- Only clean stormwater may be discharged to the storm drain system. It is illegal as well as harmful to the environment to discharge wastes, wash water, or materials of any kind to the storm drain. This includes solid and liquid wastes from draining automotive fluids, leaking vehicles, wash water, paint, concrete, sediment, etc.
 - Pollutant sources must be managed to prevent contact with stormwater. Do this by keeping materials and wastes covered.
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Storm**Drains****vs.****Sanitary****Sewers**

Storm drains and sanitary sewers have two distinctly different functions. It's important to understand the difference.

- Storm Drains collect and transport runoff from rainfall directly into creeks and rivers. These are typically the drains you see in streets and parking lots. Storm drain systems do not remove pollutants from water before it is discharged to creeks and rivers.
 - Sanitary Sewers collect wastewater from indoor plumbing such as toilets, sinks, washing machines, and floor drains – and flow to a sewage treatment plant. The treatment plant removes most pollutants from wastewater before it is discharged to the river.
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**Typical
Areas of
Concern**

We don't always see the major effects of stormwater pollution. Every pollutant, no matter how small, harms the aquatic life, affects overall water quality and impacts our enjoyment of our creeks and rivers. Many everyday activities contribute to stormwater pollution. However, there are many ways to help reduce impacts to the environment.

- **Vehicle Repair/Maintenance:** Should be conducted indoors if possible. Used oil/fluids should be stored indoors in sealed containers and disposed of properly. Never pour vehicle fluids into storm drain or sewer. If leaking vehicles are stored outdoors, do so on private property and use drip pans to capture leaking fluid. Repair as soon as possible.
 - **Surface cleaning and pressure washing water:** Must be contained, collected, and discharged to the sanitary sewer. This includes water from carpet cleaning, equipment cleaning, outdoor surface washing, etc.
 - **Latex paint cleanup:** Wash water from cleaning brushes, rollers, and tools may be discharged to the sanitary sewer. Excess paint can be recycled or left to dry in the can before disposing with garbage. Never pour excess paint into storm drain or sanitary sewer. Wastewater from cleaning equipment used for latex paint may not be disposed of on the ground or to the storm drain.
 - **Ready-mix concrete mixing and cleanup:** Must be conducted in a manner that prevents concrete and concrete rinse water from entering the storm drain system or off-site areas. Cleanup should always be done in a contained area that does not discharge to the storm drain system.
 - **Sediment control:** To help prevent problems associated with track-out of mud and dirt, unpaved access points should be stabilized. Sweeping should be conducted on a regular basis.
 - **Clean-up of outdoor spills:** Use a broom, not a hose. Use absorbents such as cat litter or saw dust as needed and dispose of properly.
 - **Swimming pool/spa water:** Must be free of chemicals, debris, algae; must have a pH between 6.5 and 8.5; and the flow-rate must not cause damage to the storm drain system or cause downstream erosion.
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**Allowable
Stormwater
Discharges**

Some discharge types are allowable to the storm drain system. Generally, if the following materials do not contain or cause pollutants to enter the storm drain system, they may be discharged to the storm drain system.

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| • Discharges from drinking water sources | • Discharges from natural water sources | • Water from crawl space pumps |
| • Landscape/Lawn watering | • Individual residential car washing | • Air conditioning condensate discharges |
| • Discharges from emergency fire-fighting activities | • Water from Footing/Foundation Drains | • Dechlorinated and algae free swimming pool discharges |
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**Corrective
Action**

Stormwater violations will result in the issuance of a **Notice of Violation** that requires the violations to be corrected and proof of compliance to be submitted within a specified time frame. Violations also may result in fines up to \$5,000 per violation and \$10 per gallon of discharge.
