

Material storage

Appropriate storage of detergents and cleaners and the use of spill kits can help prevent pollutants from reaching the storm drain.

- Store cleaners where they are protected from rain and in such a way that prevents spills from reaching the storm drain system or sanitary sewer.
- Use sturdy, intact containers for bulk cleaning agents. Keep lids on waste barrels and containers, and store them indoors or under cover, whenever possible, to eliminate exposure to rain.
- Use secondary containment for bulk fluids, where possible, to prevent accidental discharges to the sewer or storm drain.
- Keep dumpster lids and drains closed.
- Any hazardous materials or wastes used or generated at your site must be managed according to state regulations. Consult the county Environmental Management Department or the Business Environmental Resource Center (BERC) for details.
- Keep storage areas clean and dry. Conduct regular inspections so that leaks and spills are detected as soon as possible.
- Maintain a fully stocked spill kit near any bulk cleaning agents.

Storm drains vs. sanitary sewers

It is important to note that the sanitary sewer is not the same as the storm drainage system:

The **sanitary sewer** collects waste water and treats it prior to discharging it back into the environment.

The **storm drainage** system drains found in streets and parking lots, as well as gutters and roadside ditches drains directly to local waterways with no treatment.

Fines

Sacramento County's stormwater ordinance provides for fines of up to \$5000 per day for stormwater violations. City Ordinances provide for similar fine levels.



Sacramento Stormwater Quality Partnership

(including the County of Sacramento and the cities of Sacramento, Citrus Heights, Elk Grove, Folsom, Galt, and Rancho Cordova)

(916) 808-4H2O (4426); www.beriverfriendly.net

FOR BUSINESS

BERC helps businesses understand and comply with environmental regulations. This business service is free and confidential.

Business Environmental Resource Center (BERC)
(916) 874-2100; www.sacberc.org

Non-emergency Illegal Discharges (916) 808-4H2O (4426)

Sanitary Sewer Discharges

Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District (Regional San) Wastewater Source Control Section (916) 875-6470
City of Galt (209) 366-7260

Hazardous Waste Disposal

Sacramento County (916) 875-8550
City of Sacramento (916) 264-5011
City of Citrus Heights (916) 727-4770
City of Elk Grove (916) 627-3232
City of Folsom (916) 355-8367
City of Galt (209) 366-7260
City of Rancho Cordova (916) 851-8710

Stormwater Departments

Sacramento County (916) 874-6851
City of Sacramento (916) 264-5011
City of Citrus Heights (916) 727-4770
City of Elk Grove (916) 687-3005
City of Folsom (916) 355-8344
City of Galt (209) 366-7260
City of Rancho Cordova (916) 851-8710

Stormwater Compliance for COMMERCIAL AUTO WASHING AND DETAILING BUSINESSES



SACRAMENTO STORMWATER
QUALITY PARTNERSHIP

DISPOSE OF POLLUTANTS PROPERLY

Many businesses wash cars as their main activity or as a complement to their main business.

Discharges of wastewater to the storm drain system, associated with

commercial auto washing and detailing, are very common. However, these discharges are

prohibited by local stormwater ordinances as well as state and federal law. This prohibition applies to any person or company that washes cars as part of any commercial enterprise, including, but not limited to, auto dealers, auto mechanical or body repair, auto rental businesses, detailers, limousine companies, or any business that operates a fleet.

In 2004, the County of Sacramento, and the cities within the County, began conducting regular stormwater pollution compliance inspections at a variety of industrial and commercial businesses, such as auto dealers and certain automotive service businesses. The suggestions in this brochure can help a business prepare for an inspection.

Pollutants commonly associated with car washing include detergents and other cleaners, oil, grease, dirt and road grime. Even biodegradable soaps may be toxic when they reach a creek or waterbody.

Familiarize yourself with the following shop management tips in order to help maintain an environmentally compliant facility.

If car washing is a central activity of your business, the following practices should be followed:

- Consider constructing a wash pad that drains to the sanitary sewer, if one is not already in place. All installations connected to the sanitary sewer must meet the requirements of the local sewerage agency and building department. The pad should be covered and sloped, or bermed to prevent additional drainage, such as stormwater runoff, from entering the sanitary sewer. Failure to prevent additional drainage from entering the sanitary sewer may result in assessment of significant fees. Where proper sloping and coverage is impractical, automatic diverter valves may be used if approved by the local sewerage agency and building department.
- Monitor and control the use of your wash pad to ensure that all discharge requirements are observed. Do not allow public access to your wash pad.
- Understand the discharge requirements of the sewerage agency. Some activities, such as acid washing and engine degreasing, may create wastewaters that are not allowed to be discharged to the sanitary sewer. Some waste streams are hazardous and must be disposed of according to hazardous waste laws. Call Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District at (916) 875-6470 for details.
- Treat and recycle wastewater to minimize water use and sanitary sewer charges. Call the Business Environmental Resource Center (BERC) for free information.
- Install an oil/water separator if required by the sewerage agency or building department.
- Post signs to remind employees not to discharge wastewater and other pollutants to the storm drain.

If car washing is an occasional activity of your business, the following practices should be followed:

- Installation of a permanent wash pad for the purpose of occasional use may be prohibitively expensive. If possible, avoid washing vehicles on site and take vehicles to a commercial car wash that is properly connected to the sanitary sewer.
- It is sometimes possible to utilize portable containment devices to collect the wastewater. Once it is contained, a pump can be used to discharge the wastewater through a hose to the sanitary sewer, provided that the requirements of the local sewerage agency are met. Do not use an electric pump without providing adequate protection from electrical shock.
- If car washing is provided as a courtesy benefit to your customers, consider providing a voucher for a properly equipped commercial car wash instead.
- Wastewater from washing the exterior of a very small number of cars may be discharged, with the permission of the property owner, to a landscaped area and allowed to soak into the ground. Do not use this method for wastewater from engine degreasing or if the discharge contains hazardous materials or waste. Do not use this method if the

volume of wastewater produced will overflow the landscaped area, if the wastewater will harm landscaping or soil, or if any type of nuisance or hazardous condition will result.

Additional notes for fleets and automobile sales lots:

- Fleet and sales lot owners must be careful with solvents or cleaners used to remove protective coatings from new cars. Discharges of these materials to the storm drain is never allowed.
- Employees or contractors that utilize cleaning agents on fleets or cars in sales lots must collect the resulting wastewater and discharge it to the sanitary sewer. It is not permissible to simply allow the water to evaporate, as the pollutants are simply left behind and will be mobilized by subsequent rainfall.

Residential car washing

- Wastewater discharges to the storm drain from car washing by residents is not currently prohibited by local ordinances in Sacramento County. However, residents are encouraged to utilize commercial car washes instead.

THE BASICS

Stormwater regulations include two basic requirements:

- Only rain water may be discharged to a storm drain. It is illegal as well as harmful to the environment to discharge wastes, wash water, cleaning agents, or materials of any kind to the storm drain. This includes solid and liquid wastes from car washing, degreasing, sanding, painting, leaking vehicles, and parts cleaning.
- Minimize the contact of rainfall and runoff with pollutant sources. Do this by maintaining a clean facility, keeping materials covered, and managing wastes responsibly.