

# VEHICLE SERVICE FACILITIES

## Best Management Practices

Chapter 1 of the Best Management Practices Manual for the  
City's Storm Water Management Program



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## Introduction

In the City of Santa Cruz, water in streets, gutters, and storm drains flows directly to local creeks, the San Lorenzo River, or Monterey Bay without any treatment. So, when vehicle fluids get spilled, leaked or washed into the street, they can harm our aquatic environment. Wash water used in vehicle cleaning often carries dirt, soap and degreasers, which also damage sensitive creek habitats and finally end up polluting our bay and ocean. **In fact, discharging any kind of polluting substance into a storm drain or any place where it will run off into a storm drain is against the law.**

In order to reduce the amount of pollutants reaching local storm drains, the City developed “Best Management Practices” (BMPs) for various types of businesses. All vehicle service facilities, including auto repair shops, gas stations, car and truck rental companies, auto body repair shops, car wash and detail businesses, and vehicle dealerships, are required to abide by the following Mandatory BMPs.

## Mandatory Best Management Practices

### 1. Employee Training and Hired Contractors:

a. All employees must be trained on the mandatory Best Management Practices for Vehicle Service Facilities prior to engaging in any related activities. A log of all training events, during the past year, must be kept on-site and made available to the City upon request.

b. Ensure that all employees abide by these BMPs, and any other applicable storm water and wastewater discharge requirements.

c. Ensure that hired contractors are knowledgeable of and abide by these BMPs, and storm water and wastewater discharge requirements. Consider incorporating applicable BMPs into your contracts with contractors to ensure that they abide by them while working at your site.

### 2. Outside Paved Areas Cleaning:

a. Sidewalks, gutters, plazas, alleyways, outdoor eating areas, steps, and other outside areas should be cleaned by sweeping. If water is used to clean or rinse, all the wastewater must be collected and disposed of in the sanitary sewer. The wastewater may not runoff into the street or be discharged into the storm drain system. Leaves and other debris should not be left behind, such as in the street or gutter, after the cleaning event. If any cleaning chemicals will be used, please contact the Wastewater Treatment Facility, at 831-420-6050, in advance of the cleaning event for discharge approval.

b. When cleaning driveways and parking lots, all the wastewater must be collected and disposed of properly. Please contact an Environmental Compliance Inspector, at 831-420-6050, regarding the proper disposal method. Not all wastewater is acceptable for discharge to the Wastewater Treatment Facility.

c. When cleaning loading docks and delivery areas, the wash water from these areas must be discharged to the sanitary sewer in accordance with the Sewer Use ordinance. Loading dock and delivery areas must be kept clean and free of food waste and debris at all times.

d. Cleaning solvents may not be used outside to clean ground surfaces, such as sidewalks, walkways, plazas, patios, driveways, loading docks, delivery areas, or dumpster areas, unless all the solvent is cleaned up and properly disposed of.

### **3. Floor Drains:**

a. All indoor floor drains that are connected to the storm drain system must be permanently plugged.

b. Floor drains in work areas are prohibited. The exception is if the work area is used exclusively for washing of vehicle exteriors. In that case, the floor drain may be connected to the sanitary sewer.

### **4. Mop Water:**

a. Preferably, sweep or vacuum shop floors instead of hosing or mopping with water. If you do mop the shop floor, the mop water must be discharged to the sanitary sewer unless it contains hazardous materials. The following procedure is mandatory for shops that mop their floors:

- Clean up spills with rags or dry absorbent.
- Sweep the floor.
- Mop floor and discharge mop water to the sanitary sewer via a sink or toilet.
- Floor cleaning wastewater may not be discharged, directly or indirectly, to the storm drain system.

If the mop water contains vehicle fluids or other hazardous materials, it must be shipped off-site properly as hazardous or contaminated waste and may not be disposed of in the sanitary sewer or storm drain system.

### **5. Cleaning Engines and Parts, and Flushing Radiators**

a. Wastewater from parts cleaning, engine cleaning, drive train and undercarriage cleaning, and radiator flushing must be contained and may not be discharged, directly or indirectly, into the storm drain or the sanitary sewer. These waste fluids must be manifested as 'recycled' or properly hauled as 'hazardous waste' or 'contaminated' waste. Vehicle fluids, chemicals, hazardous materials, and floor cleaning wastewater may not be discharged, directly or indirectly, to the storm drain system.

b. Do not wash or rinse parts outdoors.

c. When cleaning parts over a solvent sink or tank, rinse and drain the parts so that the solvent will not drip onto the floor. Keep solvent sinks and tanks covered when not in use. Solvents and waste aqueous cleaners may not be discharged to the storm drain or sanitary sewer.

## **6. Vehicle Cleaning & Washing:**

a. Exterior vehicle washing using detergents or cleansers must be conducted in a City approved wash pad area. The wash pad area must be sloped and bermed to prevent discharge to the storm drain and to prevent excess storm water from running to the pad area drain. The City may require that the wash pad area be covered. Treatment may be required prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer system.

b. If you use acid-based wheel cleaners, be sure that the rinse water does not runoff to the storm drain. If the rinse water is discharged to the sanitary sewer, it may need to be treated (to comply with pH and other limits) prior to discharge.

c. If you remove the protective coating (i.e., cosmoline) from a new car, do not discharge any materials to the storm drain. If a solvent is used, the waste fluids may not be discharged to the sanitary sewer.

## **7. Fuel Islands:**

Dry methods must be used to clean fueling islands and adjoining areas. Dry methods include using rags or absorbents, sweeping, and vacuuming.

## **8. Auto Body Repair and Painting:**

a. Conduct body repair, sanding, and painting work indoors.

b. When receiving damaged vehicles, inspect for leaks. Use drip pans if necessary.

c. Sweep shop floors instead of mopping. Clean up wet sanding drips with a rag, or let the drips dry and then sweep or vacuum.

d. Do not use water to control over-spray or dust in the paint booth unless the water is collected and treated prior to discharge into the sanitary sewer. In addition, paint gun cleaning wastes may not be discharged to the sanitary sewer or storm drain.

e. Vehicle wash water from an auto body repair or painting shop may not be discharged or allowed to flow outside.

## **9. Wrecked Vehicles:**

If your shop accepts wrecked vehicles:

a. When a wrecked vehicle is delivered to your shop, place drip pans under the vehicle immediately to prevent fluids from leaking out.

b. If wrecked vehicles are delivered to your shop when your business is closed (e.g. overnight), make arrangements with the towing companies you work with to ensure that they place drip pans under wrecked vehicles to prevent fluids from leaking onto the ground.

c. Drain fluids from wrecked vehicles and any “parts” into appropriate containers as soon as possible.

- d. If possible, park wrecked vehicles and place “parts” over concrete, not asphalt or dirt.

## **10. Leaks and Spill Prevention & Cleanup:**

- a. Use drip pans under leaking vehicles to capture fluids.
- b. Whenever possible, change vehicle fluids indoors. If changing, adding, or draining vehicle fluids outside, all work must be conducted within areas where spills will be contained and cleaned up immediately. Immediately transfer drained fluids to a designated waste storage area.
- c. Clean up leaks and spills immediately. Be sure that the leak or spill has been stopped at its source. Never rinse or hose leaks or spills into a street, parking lot, or the storm drain system.
- d. If absorbent is used for leaks and spills, they are not considered “cleaned up” until the absorbent is also picked up and disposed of properly. If possible, use oleophilic mops to clean up spilled oil so the oil can be recycled
- e. Drip pans and open containers containing vehicle fluids must not be left unattended unless they are covered securely and stored within secondary containment.
- f. Drip pans and adequate spill prevention and clean-up materials must be kept on-site and easily available for use.
- g. A spill response plan must be maintained and kept current. The spill response plan shall be made available to City inspectors upon request.

## **11. Chemicals, Materials, and Waste Storage**

- a. Keep chemicals, materials, and wastes stored indoors. If stored outside, keep within secondary containment and protected from rain and runoff. Keep containers lids on securely. Avoid storing chemicals, materials, and wastes near storm drains whenever possible.
- b. Hazardous materials and wastes, including oil and antifreeze, must be stored within secondary containment. Store other bulk chemicals within secondary containment whenever possible.
- c. Keep storage areas clean and dry. Inspect storage areas regularly for leaks and spills.
- d. Keep waste fluids separate unless otherwise advised by your waste hauler. Combining wastes generally reduces your ability to recycle and can greatly increase your disposal costs.
- e. All hazardous material and waste regulations, including labeling, storage, and waste disposal, must be complied with. For more information, call the County Department of Environmental Health, at 831-454-2022.

f. Store batteries within secondary containment. Locate batteries either on the floor or on the lower levels of secured shelving for earthquake protection.

## **12. Wipes, Rags, Paper Towels, and Plastic Gloves Disposal:**

a. Ensure that wipes, rags, paper towels and plastic gloves are disposed of as solid hazardous waste if contaminated with a hazardous material. If these are used in a break room, kitchen, office, or non-hazardous environment, then they can be disposed of in the garbage. These items may not be disposed of in a toilet, mop sink, or any other sanitary sewer drain because they can create a blockage in the sewer line that may result in a sewer overflow into the street, storm drain system, or environment.

b. Ensure that all your employees and any hired janitorial service are aware of (a) above.

## **13. Windows, Walls, and Building Cleaning:**

a. The wastewater from cleaning windows, walls, and building exteriors may not be discharged to a street or the storm drain system. Be sure that employees or a hired cleaning service take measures to prevent the discharge of these wastes to the storm drain.

b. If cleaning building exteriors or surfaces painted with lead-based or mercury-additive paint, please contact an Environmental Compliance Inspector, at 420-6050, regarding the proper disposal method in advance of the cleaning event for discharge approval.

c. If water is used to remove paint or graffiti from building exteriors, walls, steps, signs, and other surfaces, the wastewater and paint particles may not be discharged to the street or storm drain system. This wastewater may be discharged to the sanitary sewer if the paint does not contain lead and the large paint particles are filtered out prior to discharge. (If the paint contains lead, please call the County of Santa Cruz Household Hazardous Waste Facility at 454-2606 for disposal information.)

d. If blasting or sanding is used to remove paint or graffiti, the paint particles, blasting material, sand, or dust may not be allowed to reach the storm drain system nor may it be disposed of in the sanitary sewer. Particles and sand should be swept up and disposed of in the trash provided it is reasonably dry, the paint does not contain lead, and other hazardous materials are not present.

## **14. Refuse and Recycling Containers and Trash Enclosures:**

a. Leaking containers or garbage bags may not be placed into a dumpster.

b. Dumpster and garbage can lids must be kept on securely. Do not allow trash to spill out or overflow the dumpster or garbage can.

c. When cleaning areas where trash and recycling is contained and stored, such as trash enclosures, or when cleaning individual cans, containers, and dumpsters, the wastewater must be collected and discharged to the sanitary sewer. This applies to all types of cleaning methods using water or fluids including: pressure washing, steam cleaning, rinsing with water only,

mopping, scrubbing, etc. If the wastewater contains cleaning chemicals, please contact the Wastewater Treatment Facility in advance of the cleaning event for discharge approval.

d. Leakage from dumpsters or trash and recycling containers may not be discharged to or allowed to reach the storm drain system. Clean up all such leaks as soon as possible with absorbents, or by wet vacuum or mopping with discharge to sanitary sewer. Whenever possible, avoid storing the dumpster or trash and recycling containers near or over a storm drain inlet. If you have a leaking dumpster or trash/recycling container, please call the City's Customer Service Division at 420-5220 to get it repaired or replaced.

### **15. Leaves, Landscaping and Storm Drain Inlets:**

a. Leaves and vegetation clippings, mowing, and pruning waste may never be directed to or placed, dumped, raked, hosed, power-washed, or blown into the street or storm drain system.

b. Pesticides and herbicides may not be dumped into the street or storm drain system, nor poured down an indoor drain. Unwanted pesticides and herbicides must be disposed of as hazardous waste.

c. Storm drains at your site must be kept free of leaves, dirt, and debris. Outdoor sumps and catch basins must be cleaned between September 1<sup>st</sup> and October 15<sup>th</sup> each year. During the rainy season, do a "before the storm" inspection of the storm drain inlets and gutters on your site whenever possible to prevent debris from entering the storm drain system when it rains.

### **16. Roof Maintenance and Cooling Systems, Air Conditioning/HVAC Systems and Sprinkler Systems:**

a. Wastewater discharges from roof or roof fixture cleaning, whether by power washing, washing or rinsing may not be discharged to a street or the storm drain system, or to a roof drain which drains to a street or the storm drain system. Wastewater from this type of cleaning should be discharged to the sanitary sewer system unless solvents or toxic chemicals are used, in which case, this wastewater shall be disposed of as contaminated or hazardous waste.

b. Refrigeration equipment discharges, including condensate and any chemical additives, must go to the sanitary sewer and not to the street or storm drain system. Be sure that your maintenance person or a hired contractor is knowledgeable and skilled at minimizing corrosion with correct chemical treatments.

c. When cleaning air conditioning equipment and HVAC systems, the cleaning fluids, wastewater, and any additives (such as anti-scale or anti-corrosion chemicals, algaecides, or biocides) may not be discharged to a street or the storm drain system. To be sure that the wastewater is acceptable for discharge to the sanitary sewer, please contact an Environmental Compliance Inspector, at 420-6050, in advance of the cleaning event for approval.

d. Ensure that your maintenance person or a hired contractor is knowledgeable of these requirements and knows where to direct the wastewater so it doesn't accidentally get discharged into the roof rain water drainage pipe.

e. Fire prevention sprinkler systems may not be flushed or drained into the storm drain system. When sprinkler systems are flushed or drained, the water should be directed into the sanitary sewer.

f. Ensure that the cleaning chemicals are stored in appropriate containment, which prevent leaks and spills.

### **17. Polystyrene “To-Go” Containers:**

The use of polystyrene (or Styrofoam) disposable food service containers, including “to-go” containers, is prohibited per the City’s Environmentally Acceptable Food Packaging Ordinance 6.48.

**For more information, please call a City Environmental Compliance Inspector at 831-420-6050. In addition, please remember to contact the City Planning Department, at 420-5100, prior to making any plumbing changes!**

## **Recognition Programs for Local Businesses**

### **CLEAN OCEAN BUSINESS PROGRAM**

If you are in compliance with the above BMPs, you may qualify as a City of Santa Cruz Clean Ocean Business! Clean Ocean Businesses operate in compliance with storm water and wastewater requirements, which help to protect water quality and keep our waterways and ocean clean. Clean Ocean Businesses receive annual window decals and free advertising in the local newspaper(s). In addition, Clean Ocean Businesses are also recognized on the City’s website. For more information, please call your City Environmental Compliance Inspector at 831-420-6050.

### **MONTEREY BAY AREA GREEN BUSINESS PROGRAM**

Consider becoming a Certified Green Business! The Monterey Bay Area Green Business Program certifies businesses that are environmentally proactive and go above and beyond the regulatory requirements. Green Businesses implement practices to reduce pollution and conserve resources, such as water and energy. Certified businesses are listed on the program’s website, receive free advertising in local media, and may use the Green Business logo in their own marketing. To find out more, please go to the Monterey Bay Area Green Business Program website at [www.montereygreenbusiness.org](http://www.montereygreenbusiness.org) or call the City’s Green Business Coordinator at 831-420-5160. **GO GREEN!**