

COMPLIANCE ASSISTANCE BULLETIN

News You Can Use

STORMWATER COMPLIANCE - WASTE MANAGEMENT AND HOUSEKEEPING ISSUES

Purpose

The purpose of this Compliance Assistance Bulletin is to help facility operators and contractors comply with Stormwater Program requirements.

Issue

Detergents, food waste, grease, oil, liquids from dumpsters, mop water, and wash effluent are routinely discharged into the storm drainage system. When pollutants enter the storm drainage system, they flow untreated to our creeks and rivers, cause harm to aquatic life, degrade the quality of local waters, and can block underground pipes. Vermin populations increase due to accumulations of food, grease, and debris in storm drain catch basins.

The storm drainage system includes all storm drains, roadside gutter pans and ditches, drainage channels and swales, creeks and streams.

Typical Areas of Concern: Waste Management-Dumpsters

- **Dumpsters/waste bins:** should be sound, leak free, free of spills and never overfilled. Lids must always be closed when not adding or removing waste.
- **Liquids/food waste:** liquids should never be disposed of with dumpster trash. Food waste should be carefully bagged in closed non-leaking bags/containers.
- **Litter/unauthorized dumping:** must be cleaned up in a compliant manner. Restricting access to your trash bins and waste storage areas/corrals may be helpful.
- **Outdoor storage:** Waste or other materials must be contained and managed/stored to prevent the discharge of pollutants into the storm drainage system.
- **Signage:** may help to stop littering and identify proper waste handling and receptacles.
- **Waste area maintenance:** should be conducted on a regular basis in a compliant manner (no discharges to stormdrain system). Spills should be cleaned immediately and loose trash/waste put into non-leaking bags, closed, and disposed of to the dumpster.

Typical Areas of Concern: Grease/oil waste and Tallow Bins

- **Tallow bin use:** (exterior grease/oil bins): All grease/oil waste must be disposed of properly (NOT to the trash dumpster) and lids must be closed when not adding waste.
- **Spill control:** clean spills immediately using dry sweep methods (rags, absorbent with broom which is swept up and disposed of to a non-leaking closed bag to the dumpster).

Typical Areas of Concern: Waste Management-parking lots/common areas

- **Litter/unauthorized dumping:** must be cleaned up in a compliant manner
- **Spill control:** spills should be cleaned up promptly using dry sweep methods. Regular dry sweeping of parking lots may help maintain the area.
- **Sediments/Green wastes:** should never be swept or blown into gutters or street but collected using dry sweep methods then recycled or disposed of properly.
- **Equipment stored outdoors:** must be checked for leakage of oils, fluids, etc. Drip pans may be used. Contaminated equipment must be cleaned in a compliant manner and if stored outdoors, must be covered with fastened tarps during winter months.
- **Storm Drains:** The areas in and around storm drains should be free of accumulated food waste, mop strings, waste water, detergents, grease, oil, and other items.

Typical Areas of Concern: Surface Washing/Pressure Or Equipment Washing

- **Waste Water Management:** Waste water from all equipment, mats, surfaces, and pressure washing activities (even if performed by a contractor) must be collected before entering the storm drainage system or leaving the property, and discharged to the sanitary sewer. For more information see Best Management Practices for Pressure Washers on the Department’s website at EMD.SACCOUNTY.NET.
 - **Surface washing:** Regular dry sweeping of parking lots may help maintain the area. All spills, solid waste, and debris must be cleaned properly before surface washing is done.
- NOTE:** There are currently NO “environmentally friendly” or bio-degradable products that may be discharged to the storm drainage system!

Questions and Answers

What is the difference between storm drains and sanitary sewers?

The storm drain system directs untreated water into creeks, rivers, and oceans, causing water pollution and is harmful to fish and other aquatic life. The sanitary sewer system directs water to a treatment plant where it is treated prior to discharge. Most drains located in streets and parking lots are storm drains. Outdoor drains rarely lead to the sanitary sewer.

Why should I be concerned about stormwater and storm drains?

Water pollution is everyone’s business and should be a major concern for all residents. Polluted stormwater is a major source of contamination in our creeks and rivers.

What if I have a contractor that manages my waste and/or surface cleaning?

You are responsible for ensuring your contractor conducts all waste management and cleaning activities in a compliant manner. If your contractor violates local stormwater ordinances you will be held accountable for their actions. Your contractor will also face potential enforcement action from local jurisdictions.

What happens if I have an inspector visit and I have stormwater violations?

Stormwater violations may result in a Notice of Violation, a Notice of Non-Compliance, or a Citation.

Why is training so important?

Training your employees and contractors helps ensure that any policies/procedures you have in place to ensure compliance are adhered to. Instructional/informational signage also helps to educate the public, your customers, and your employees.

For More Information

For more information call (916) 875-8440 or go to the Department website EMD.SACCOUNTY.NET.

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