

Storm Water Pollution Prevention for Businesses

One of the most common types of pollution from businesses is contaminated water runoff, usually from cleaning and maintenance activities. Simple best management practices (BMPs) can prevent storm water pollution, and prevention is good business. It means clean water, clean neighborhoods and it shows your customers that you care about your community.

■ Food & Restaurants:

Food waste, grease, cleaning fluids, mop water and trash from restaurant operations often make their way into the City of Green Bay storm drain system, and do not get treated before reaching local waterways. This pollutes our drinking water and contaminates waterways, making them unsafe for people and wildlife. Follow these best management practices to prevent pollution, protect public health and avoid fines or legal action.

- **Cleaning & Maintenance:** Clean equipment, floor mats, filters and garbage cans in a mop sink, wash rack or floor drain connected to the sewer through a grease trap. Don't wash them or pour wash water in a parking lot, alley, sidewalk or street. Sweep outside areas and put the debris in the garbage, instead of sweeping or hosing it into the parking lot or street.
- **Recycle Oil & Grease:** Oil and grease wastes can be recycled. Look in the yellow pages for disposal information. Don't pour oil or grease into sinks, floor drains or onto a parking lot or street. Keep grease bins covered and contained.
- **Dumpster areas:** Keep dumpster lids closed and the areas around them clean. Do not fill with liquid waste or hose them out. Call your trash hauler to replace any dumpsters that are damaged or leak. Do not wash down or steam clean trash enclosure area or trash bin unless you collect the water and dispose of it into the sanitary sewer. Hire a mobile pressure wash business that is familiar with the storm water regulations to clean these areas and make sure they provide you with a record of proper wastewater disposal.
- **Managing Spills:** Use dry methods for spill cleanup, sweeping and using cat litter instead of hosing. Have spill containment and cleanup kits available for possible spills on your property. To report serious toxic spills, call 911.
- **Handling Toxic Chemicals:** Dispose of all unwanted toxic materials like cleaners, solvents and detergents through a hazardous waste hauler. These items are not trash. Use non-toxic cleaning



products whenever possible. For information on what to do, or where to take hazardous waste, call the City of Green Bay DPW at (920)-448-3100.

■ Automotive Services

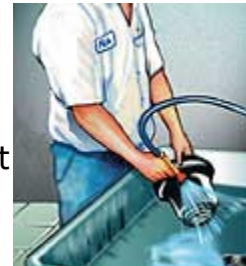
Oil, grease, anti-freeze and other toxic automotive fluids often make their way into the City of Green Bay storm drain system, and do not get treated before reaching local waterways. This pollutes our drinking water and contaminates waterways, making them unsafe for people and wildlife. Follow these best management practices (BMPs) to prevent pollution, protect public health and avoid fines or legal action.

- **Storing Hazardous Waste:** Keep your liquid waste segregated. Many fluids can be recycled via hazardous waste disposal companies if they are not mixed. Store all materials under cover with spill containment or inside to prevent contamination of rainwater runoff.
- **Proper Disposal of Hazardous Waste:** Recycle used motor oil and oil filters, anti-freeze and other hazardous automotive fluids, batteries, tires and metal filings collected from grinding/polishing auto parts. Contact a licensed hazardous waste hauler. For more recycling information, call (920)-448-4500 or the Internet site:



<http://www.browncountyrecycles.org/household-hazardous-waste-disposal>

- **Cleaning Auto Parts:** Scrape parts with a wire brush or use a bake oven rather than liquid cleaners. Arrange drip pans, drying racks and drain boards so that fluids are directed back into the sink or the fluid holding tank. Do not wash parts or equipment in a parking lot, driveway or street.
- **Preventing Leaks and Spills:** Place drip pans underneath to capture fluids. Use absorbent cleaning agents instead of water to clean work areas.
- **Metal Grinding & Polishing:** Keep a bin under your lathe or grinder to capture metal filings. Send uncontaminated filings to a scrap metal recycler for reclamation. Store metal filings in a covered container or indoors.
- **Cleaning Spills:** Follow your hazardous materials response plan, as filed with your local fire department or other hazardous materials authority. Be sure that all employees are aware of the plan and are capable of implementing each phase of the plan. Use dry methods for spill cleanup (sweeping, absorbent materials, etc.). To report serious spills, call 911.



- **Washing vehicles:** Wash vehicles where the wash water can soak into grass, gravel or be diverted to nearby landscaping, away from the street and storm drains. Wash vehicles at a designated wash rack that is connected to the sanitary sewer or take vehicles to a professional car wash. Use soaps, cleaners and detergents that are labeled phosphate free or biodegradable. The safest products for the environment are vegetable based or citrus-based soaps.

■ Commercial Landscape Maintenance:

Yard waste, sediments and toxic lawn and garden chemicals used in commercial landscape maintenance often make their way into the City of Green Bay storm drain system and do not get treated before reaching local waterways. This pollutes our drinking water and contaminates local waterways, making them unsafe for people and wildlife. Follow these best management practices to prevent pollution, protect public health and avoid fines or legal action.

- **Recycle Yard Waste:** Recycle leaves, grass clippings and other yard waste. Do not blow, sweep, rake or hose yard waste into the street. Let your customers know about grass cycling --the natural recycling of grass by leaving clippings on the lawn when mowing instead of using a grass catcher. Grass clippings will quickly decompose, returning valuable nutrients to the soil.
- **Use Fertilizers, Herbicides & Pesticides Safely:** Fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides are often carried into the storm drain system by sprinkler runoff. Use natural, non-toxic alternatives to traditional garden chemicals. If you must use chemical fertilizers, herbicides, or pesticides spot apply rather than blanketing entire areas, avoid applying near curbs and driveways and never apply before a rain.
- **Recycle Hazardous Waste:** Pesticides, fertilizers, herbicides and motor oil contaminate landfills and should be disposed of through a Hazardous Waste Facility. For information on proper disposal, call (920)-448-4500 or Internet site:
<http://www.browncountyrecycles.org/household-hazardous-waste-disposal>
- **Use Water Wisely:** Conserve water and prevent runoff by controlling the amount of water and direction of sprinklers. Sprinklers should be on long enough to allow water to soak into the ground but not so long as to cause runoff. Periodically inspect, fix leaks and realign sprinkler heads.
- **Planting:** Plant native vegetation to reduce the need of water, fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.



- **Prevent Erosion:** Erosion washes sediments, debris and toxic runoff into the storm drain system, polluting waterways. Prevent erosion and sediment runoff by using ground cover, berms and vegetation down-slope to capture runoff. Avoid excavation or grading during wet weather.
- **Store Materials Safely:** Keep landscaping materials and debris away from the street, gutter and storm drains. On-site stockpiles of materials should be covered with plastic sheeting to protect from rain, wind and runoff.

■ **Carpet Cleaning:**

Toxic chemicals and discharged waste water from carpet, drapery, furniture and window cleaning often make their way into the City of Green Bay storm drain system and do not get treated before reaching local waterways. This pollutes our drinking water and contaminates local waterways, making them unsafe for people and wildlife. Following these best management practices will prevent pollution, comply with regulations and protect public health. These guidelines apply even if the cleaning products are labeled “nontoxic” or “biodegradable”. Although these products may be less harmful to the environment, they can still have harmful effects if they enter the storm drain untreated.

- **Dispose of wastewater properly:** Wastewater from cleaning equipment must be discharged into a sink, toilet, or other drain connected to the sanitary sewer system within sanitary sewer discharge limits, or hauled off and disposed of properly. Wastewater should never be discharged into a street, gutter, parking lot or storm drain.
- **Filter wastewater:** Carpet cleaning wastewater should be filtered before discharging it to the sanitary sewer since fibers and other debris in the wastewater can clog pipes. The filtered material can be disposed of in the garbage, as long as the waste is not contaminated with hazardous pollutants.

■ **Mobile Vehicle Maintenance**

Wash in a designated area that has a berm up to contain the wash water. Common water control devices are: recycling systems; pretreatment or sewer discharge systems; limited recycling systems; wash pits (portable vinyl wash pads), vacuum sludge filtering systems; wet-dry vacuums, sump pumps; drain covers; portable dams; vac-brooms; oil absorbent pads, booms, pillows, and tubes; plastic sheeting; filter tubs; buckets; pans; and squeegees. When cleaning engines using chemical additives like soaps, solvents or degreasers, the cleaning must be performed at a facility that has the equipment to properly process the contaminated wastewater runoff, or using a leak-proof ground cover device that

will catch and contain all contaminated wastewater runoff for later disposal in a manner that complies with city, county, state and federal codes.

Wastewater from cleaning equipment must be discharged into a sink, toilet, or other drain connected to the sanitary sewer

■ **General Industrial & Manufacturing Businesses:**

If you own, manage or help operate a business, especially an industrial or manufacturing company, you can help reduce storm water pollution. From environmentally friendly cleaning and maintenance activities, to recycling hazardous waste materials, businesses can do a lot to prevent storm water pollution.

- Review the cleaning and maintenance activities to look for ways to reduce runoff into the storm drain system, especially in outdoor areas like parking lots, loading docks and maintenance yards. Keep trash enclosure swept and trash bin lids closed.
- Train employees to wash vehicles and equipment indoors in a wash rack that is connected to the sanitary sewer or off-site at a commercial wash facility. Train janitorial staff to dispose of floor cleaning water in the sewer and not into the parking lot. Make sure that cooling towers, boilers, compressors, water softeners and other process equipment are connected to the sanitary sewer and do not discharge wastewater into the parking lot.
- If you use hazardous materials in your everyday business, like ink and solvents for commercial printing, or polishes and chemicals for car detailing or manufacturing after-market accessories, do not put these hazardous materials in the trash or pour them into the gutter. Take them to be recycled safely. Store chemicals, wastes, raw materials and contaminated equipment indoors or in a covered, spill contained area, to prevent exposure of these materials to storm water.
- Take advantage of less-toxic alternatives to dangerous chemicals. From detergents to drain openers, there are a lot of ways to get the same or better result without having to rely on toxic substances.