



Stormwater Pollution Prevention

Powerwashing

Concerns with Powerwashing and Local Streams

Pressure washing is used by many as part of their operation or maintenance activities. It is typically done outside with hot or cold water, with or without soaps and is used to conveniently clean automobile fleets, parking lots, building exteriors, and heavy machinery surfaces. It is used to strip paint and for preparing and treating surfaces such as buildings, bridges, and infrastructure.

The concern is that the wastewater generated from cleaning these surfaces can collect pollutants. These might include grease from food dumpster areas, sediment and vehicle fluids such as oil and gasoline from parking lots and driveways, and paint residue from stripping activities. Soaps and degreasers used in the washers are also pollutants. The discharge of this wastewater into the stormwater drainage system in your community is prohibited because it can pollute local streams and impact aquatic life.



Only Rain Down the Storm Drain

Unlike the sanitary system, pollutants are not removed from water entering storm drains before it enters local streams. Cleaning activities like pressure washing can easily contribute to water pollution if runoff is not managed properly.

Under state and federal stormwater regulatory requirements, only clean water can be discharged to storm sewer systems. Our community has a stormwater permit and is regulated under these requirements.



Best Management Practices for Stormwater Pollution Prevention

Planning

Determine the direction of the runoff from washing activities and the method that will be used to collect washwater. How should you dispose of the washwater? In a sanitary sewer, tank or other method? Contact your local wastewater treatment facility to find out if you can discharge the washwater to the sanitary sewer

Pre-Cleaning

Consider using dry methods, such as absorbents on oil spots or sweeping up trash and debris before pressure washing. Pre-cleaning waste that may be identified as hazardous waste can be costly to dispose of. Properly dispose of dry waste.

Minimize

Minimize the amount of water used when pressure washing, reducing the volume of wastewater that needs to be disposed. Avoid using cleaning products that contain hazardous substances (muriatic acid, bleach, sodium hydroxide etc.). When possible, use only water to clean surfaces.

Awareness

Beware of pressure washing hazardous materials such as lead-based paint, oils, and solvents. Proper hazardous materials disposal may be required if these materials are present. Disposal of hazardous materials can be costly.

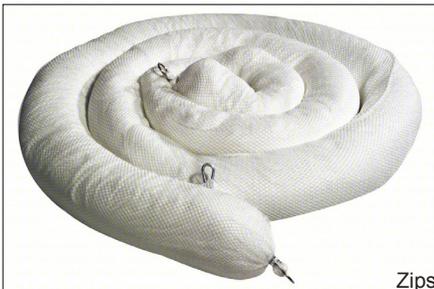
Tools to Help



Absorbents: Prior to washing, absorbents, such as kitty litter, can be used to absorb liquids on surfaces. They are easily swept up with a stiff broom. Pads can be used to clean up spills and are easily removed after the liquids are absorbed.



Berms: Manufactured berms can be used if grading is adequate and there are relatively smooth drainage surfaces. They can encircle a storm drain, allowing water to pond for later collection or diversion to the sanitary sewer.



Oil-Only Socks or Booms: These should be placed around storm drains where automotive oil residue is expected on a surface (such as a parking lot or drive-through). Socks or booms are also effective at catching debris and preventing their entry into storm drains during washing.



Bio-Bags/Bark-Bags: Bags may be placed around storm drains as a protective barrier to collect debris and larger sediment. This method is effective for washing areas with moss, dirt, or debris buildup. They will NOT prevent petroleum-based residues from entering a storm drain.



Pumps/Vacuums: Vacuum pumps and wet/dry vacs can be used to collect washwater to divert to the sanitary system. Hoses are used to send washwater to the sanitary sewer, cleanout, or holding tank.



Inflatable Pipe Plug: The plugs are inserted into a storm drain pipe and inflated for a tight fit to prevent washwater from entering the pipe. Washwater is collected in the storm drain sump and then pumped to a holding tank or sanitary sewer.



Storm Drain Covers/Mat: These are placed on the top of storm drain inlets to prevent washwater from entering the drain. They allow washwater to pond and be collected with a sump pump or shop vac.

**Only Rain Down the Storm Drain!
Protect Our Streams!**