



Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs)

Construction Sites



Storm drains are intended to drain rain water from our streets and to prevent flooding. When this rain, along with water from households (such as landscape water) mixes with urban pollutants that include oil, paint, pet waste, pesticides, litter, and other automotive fluids, it becomes polluted urban runoff. Unfortunately, because this water is not filtered or treated before it enters our rivers and waterways, storm drains also serve the *unintentional purpose* of transporting this urban pollution, contaminating our waterways, harming aquatic life, and increasing the risk of flooding by clogging gutters and catch basins.

General Construction Problems – Sediment

Soil excavation and grading operations often contribute to urban runoff pollution. By loosening large amounts of soil, earthmoving activities can cause sediment to flow into gutters, storm drains, and our rivers. Sediment is the most common pollutant washed from work sites. It can clog storm drains, leading to flooding, and can create multiple problems once it enters the river. Sediment clogs the gills of fish, blocks light transmission and increases a river's water temperature, all of which harm aquatic life and disturbs the food chain upon which fish, animals, and people depend. Sediment also carries with it other work-site pollutants such as pesticides, cleaning solvents, cement wash-out, asphalt, and vehicle fluids such as oil and fuel. Thus, poorly maintained vehicles and heavy equipment leaking fuel and oil at the construction site also contributes to stormwater pollution.

You can help prevent stormwater pollution during construction site activities by remembering the following:

- **General Business Practices**

- Schedule activities such as excavation, saw cutting, and paving during dry weather.
- Keep materials out of the rain. Store them under cover with temporary roofs or plastic sheets, protected from rainfall, runoff, and wind.
- Develop and implement erosion and sediment control plans for embankments.
- Use as little water as possible for dust control to avoid excess runoff of sediment.
- Protect all nearby storm drains with heavy duty plastic, filter fabric, sand bags, gravel bags, or other similar materials to prevent sediment and other pollutants from entering the storm drain system.
- Keep pollutants off of exposed surfaces. Place trash and recycling cans around the site.
- Cover and maintain dumpsters. Check frequently for leaks. **Never clean a dumpster by hosing it down on-site where wash water can enter the storm drain system.**
- Make sure portable toilets are in good working order. Check frequently for leaks.

- **Vehicle Maintenance**

- Maintain all vehicles and heavy equipment. **Inspect frequently for leaks.**
- Designate one area for vehicle parking, vehicle refueling, and routine equipment maintenance. The designated area should be well away from gutters and storm drains.
- Perform major vehicle maintenance and vehicle/equipment washing off site.
- Use gravel at all entrances and exits where traffic is frequent to reduce soil compaction and limit the tracking of sediment into streets and storm drains.
- Use drip pans or drop cloths to catch drips and spills.
- Do not use diesel fuel to lubricate equipment or parts.

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- **Cleaning Up**

- Ensure that there are appropriate spill kits on site and that all employees are trained on the locations and use of the kits.
- Never wash excess material such as concrete, seals, paints, etc. into a street or storm drain. Collect and recycle or dispose to a designated washout.
- Never hose down streets to clean up tracked dirt. Use wet/dry sweep methods.
- Clean up leaks, drips, and other spills immediately. This will prevent contaminated soil or residue on paved surfaces.
- Never hose down surfaces where materials have spilled. Use dry cleanup methods whenever possible.
- Clean up spills on dirt areas by digging up and properly disposing of contaminated soil.
- Sweep up dry spilled materials immediately. Never attempt to bury them or “wash them away” with water.
- Report significant spills to the appropriate spill response agencies immediately.

- **Employee and Client Education**

- Educate your employees. Include water quality training in new employee orientations and conduct annual review sessions.
- Educate your customers. Post BMPs where clients and employees can see them.

- **Handling Materials and Wastes**

- Practice source reduction – minimize waste when ordering materials. Only order the amounts needed to complete the job.
- Use recycled and recyclable materials whenever possible.
- Never bury waste materials or leave them in the street.
- Dispose of all waste properly.

Recycling and Hazardous Waste Disposal

City of Modesto
Solid Waste Management
(209)577-5494

Stanislaus County
Household Hazardous Waste Facility
(209)525-4123

**To report a clogged storm drain, spill, or illegal dumping, or for more information:
call City of Modesto Environmental Services 24/7 at (209)577-6200**