

Spill Management



You and your family play an important role in preventing pollution. As you perform daily activities at home, be proactive because it is easier to prevent pollution than to clean it up afterward. To preserve the environment and improve water quality, we must all be vigilant in keeping pollutants out of storm drains. Enacting proactive steps can also help you avoid costly fines for illegal discharges of pollutants.

Spill Cleanup

It is always best to prevent spills but be prepared when they occur. All spills must be cleaned up immediately to prevent them from leaving your property and entering the storm drain system, which includes the curb gutter.

- ◆ Create cleanup kits (granular absorbents, kitty litter, sand, absorbent pads, absorbent rolls, rags, paper & cloth towels, etc.) and place in areas where spills are likely to occur.
- ◆ The type of spill kit necessary will depend on the materials that could potentially spill at the site of the activity.
- ◆ Materials used to clean up hazardous wastes must be disposed of properly.
- ◆ Use dry cleanup methods first, such as sweeping, vacuuming, using absorbents or a scraper, when possible.
- ◆ If water is needed to clean up spills, wet methods such as pressure washing or mopping may be used. However all wash water must be contained, captured and disposed of appropriately. See Pressure Washing fact sheet for more information.
- ◆ Spills that enter a storm drain and cannot be fully recovered shall be reported promptly to the City's Stormwater Hotline at (619) 527-7500.



STORMWATER REGULATIONS

It is illegal to discharge sediments, liquids or fluids from vehicle, equipment, or container leaks into the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) (San Diego Municipal Code §43.0304). Penalties associated with these violations can be up to \$10,000 per day per incident.

Liquid Spills

- ◆ Use rags or absorbents (cat litter, sand, etc.) to soak up the spill.
- ◆ Use a hard-bristled broom to work the absorbent into the spill then sweep up all material into a sealable container. Do not leave contaminated absorbents on the ground.
- ◆ Avoid hazardous cleaning products that can create hazardous waste.

Spill Kits

Keep a spill cleanup kit accessible that is appropriate for the type of material stored with adequate supplies to respond to the largest potential spill. Special attention should be paid to liquids, hazardous materials, and waste storage and handling. Examples of spill kit materials include granular absorbents, absorbent pads, absorbent rolls or rags.

If a site or activity poses the risk of large or hazardous spills, emergency phone numbers shall be posted in a visible place with the spill kit and also included in the spill cleanup procedure discussion as part of a Best Management Practices Plan.

For information regarding proper handling and cleanup of business-related hazardous materials, contact the County of San Diego's Department of Environmental Health: <http://www.sdcountry.ca.gov/deh>

City residents can dispose of hazardous wastes by making an appointment to drop them off at the Household Hazardous Waste Transfer Facility located at the Miramar Landfill entrance. To schedule an appointment, call (858) 694-7000.

Keep Pollutants Out of Storm Drains

Many people think that when water flows into a storm drain it is treated, but the storm drain system and the sanitary sewer system are not connected. Everything that enters storm drains flows untreated directly into our creeks, rivers, bays, beaches and, ultimately, the ocean. Stormwater often contains pollutants – including chemicals, trash and vehicle fluids – all of which contaminate our beaches and harm fish and wildlife.

Whether at home or work, you can help reduce pollution and improve water quality by using the above Best Management Practices as part of your daily cleaning and maintenance routine.

