



The City of San Diego

Storm Water Pollution Prevention Program

Spills

When it rains or when water flows out of yards or over pavement, it flows directly into storm drains. Many people mistakenly believe this water gets "cleaned" before reaching waterways. The sewer system and the storm water conveyance systems (drains, inlets, and catch basins) are separate; they are not connected. Sewer water gets treated, but everything that washes into the storm water conveyance system goes untreated directly into our rivers, creeks, bays and ocean. This causes beach closures and postings due to contamination. Releasing pollutants into the storm water collection system is a violation of the City Municipal Code, (43.0301). Whether you are at home, work, or play, there are ways that residents and businesses alike can "Think Blue" and prevent pollutants from reaching our waterways.

As hard as we try to prevent them, **Spills** happen. The primary pollution concern is to prevent the substance-water, chemical, grease, etc.-from entering the City's storm water conveyance system. A well thought out and rehearsed spill response plan will greatly reduce and often eliminate the probability of the pollutants reaching the system and polluting our recreational waters. Here are some **Storm Water Best Management Practices for cleaning-up Spills:**

Establish a Spill Clean-up Plan- each establishment should have a plan that includes:

- Procedures for different types of spills (hazardous materials require special response)
- Schedule for training and refresher training for employees about the procedures
- Create clean-up kits and place in well-marked areas where spills are likely to occur
- Designate a key employee(s) who will monitor clean-up
- Post the plan in a visible location in the work area

Dry Clean-up Methods are the preferred ways to clean-up spills-

- Don't hose down outside spills
- Use rags or absorbents - cat litter, sand, etc.-- to sop-up liquid substances. And, sweep-up and dispose of absorbents into the trash can.
- If a final rinse is necessary for health reasons, collect the rinse water and dispose of it in a sink or a sanitary sewer drain. If outdoors, block the drain before applying water, and mop or wet-vacuum the water. Dispose of the rinse water into a sink or sanitary sewer drain.
- If the substance is a hazardous waste, follow proper hazardous disposal procedures. When the status of the substance is unknown, please contact substance manufacturer or one of the following agencies for the proper disposal procedure(s):

City Household Hazardous Waste Program: (619) 235-2111
Hazardous Materials Information (619) 338-2222

Other Fact sheets that may pertain to your activities:

Cleaning Impervious Surfaces (high pressure washing); Dumpsters; Be A Clean Water Leader: Control, Contain & Capture; Restaurants.

Adopt these behaviors and help Clean up our beaches and bays.

Think Blue, San Diego. For more information, call (619) 235-1000, or log on to: www.thinkbluesd.org

**Think
&
Act
Blue**

