



# STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION REQUIREMENTS FOR VEHICLE SERVICE FACILITIES

The City of Palo Alto wants to help your business comply with state and local laws that help prevent pollutants from flowing to creeks and the San Francisco Bay. Vehicle service facilities, such as retail gasoline outlets, vehicle repair shops, and commercial car washes, are required to follow City of Palo Alto's Municipal Code Chapter 16.11 and 16.13 and the Stormwater Best Management Practices (BMPs) outlined in this fact sheet.

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs)

### Maintenance Areas

- Conduct maintenance activities indoors. If outdoors, use drop cloths and drip pans to contain leaks and spills, and conduct maintenance under a shelter or cover.
- Conduct vehicle, tool, and equipment cleaning in a centralized location that is bermed or curbed, and clean small items in a tub. Clean vehicle fluids, hazardous materials, or rinse water from any floor or ground surface immediately using dry clean-up methods.
- The disposal of vehicle fluids, hazardous materials, or rinse water from cleaning operations into the storm drain inlet is prohibited. Transfer liquids to labeled, disposal containers located in a covered area to be emptied by a licensed hazardous waste disposal company or hauler.
- Dedicate area for fuel and fluid draining and refilling away from storm drains and contained by berms and/or curbs. If a spill occurs, use berms to contain the spill and cover storm drain inlets.
- Keep container lids closed. Never leave drip pans or other open containers of vehicle fluid unattended unless containers are in use or are placed in an area of secondary containment.
- If a vehicle or equipment is leaking, move indoors or under a covered area. If not possible, drain the liquid and dispose of it through a licensed hazardous waste disposal company or recycler.
- Collect all metal filings, dust, and paint chips from grinding, shaving, and sanding operations and dispose of them through a hazardous waste disposal company or recycler. Do not discharge these wastes to any drains on the property or to the storm drain or sanitary sewer system.
- Store hazardous wastes, acid-containing batteries, old/broken equipment, and liquid materials (motor oil, brake fluid, gasoline, diesel fuel, radiator fluid, etc.) in secondary containment and inside if possible. If not possible, ensure they are stored in a fully covered area and away from storm drains.

## ONLY RAINWATER IS ALLOWED TO ENTER THE STORM DRAIN SYSTEM.



Releasing pollutants directly or indirectly to the storm drain system is prohibited and may result in fines.



Chemical container without secondary containment



Chemical container with secondary containment

All secondary containments must have a roof or cover if stored outside.

### Fueling Areas

- Cover and grade fueling areas to prevent runoff of fuel leaks or spills.
- Regularly inspect the fueling areas for leaks or spills.
- Fit fuel dispensing nozzles with "hold-open latches" (automatic shutoffs). Palo Alto Fire Department requires a permit. Contact the Fire Department for more information at [Hazmat@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:Hazmat@CityofPaloAlto.org), or call (650) 617-3167.
- Post signs at the fuel dispenser or island warning vehicle owners/operators against "topping off" of vehicle fuel tanks.

### Car Washing Area Facilities

- Cover car washing areas by installing a roof, and slope the car wash area toward the wash water treatment system away from all storm drains.
- Grade car washing areas to prevent runoff of spills and to prevent run-on of stormwater.
- Do not discharge wastewater from vehicle washing operations or wash racks to the storm drain system or onto the ground. Discharge to the sanitary sewer system may be allowed if an industrial waste discharge permit is obtained. For more information on how to apply for a permit and what your business is allowed to discharge, email [Pretreatment@CityofPaloAlto.org](mailto:Pretreatment@CityofPaloAlto.org).
- Use less toxic, "environmentally friendly," "non-toxic," or "biodegradable" cleaning products.

If you need assistance with a spill, contact the City of Palo Alto 24-hour communications line at (650) 329-2413 immediately.

# STORMWATER POLLUTION PREVENTION REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL BUSINESSES

## What is Stormwater?

Stormwater flows into streets and gutters picking up pollutants, such as oil, litter, and sediment before it enters the storm drain system and travels to local creeks and the San Francisco Bay. Stormwater **is not treated** before being discharged into waterways. Your business can help prevent water pollution by following these best management practices.

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs)

### Refuse Containers

- Locate all refuse (trash, recycling, and compost) handling, storage, and disposal areas away from storm drain inlets or creeks and ensure proper labeling.
- Keep dumpster lids closed at all times and keep areas free of debris.
- Do not pour any FOG or oily waste into dumpsters.
- Keep dumpsters in good condition and ensure that leaks are not occurring. Visit [greenwasteofpaloalto.com](http://greenwasteofpaloalto.com) to learn more about commercial trash services provided by the City and to replace leaking dumpsters.

### Storm Drain Inlets

- Clearly mark storm drain inlets with the words “No Dumping - Flows to Bay” or equivalent.
- Annually inspect and clean out all storm drain inlets on your property with a vacuum or shovel before the rainy season. Storm drain inlets at sites where sediment and other debris are generated or stored may need to be monitored, cleaned, and maintained at a higher frequency.

### Outside Areas

- Keep outdoor areas and refuse areas free of trash, sediment, wash water, cigarette butts, and any other potential pollutants.
- If any paved areas are cleaned with water, wash water must be contained, captured, and reused, or properly disposed of in a private sanitary sewer cleanout.
- Cleaning solutions, fluids that cannot be recycled, and absorbent materials used for cleanup may need to be disposed of as hazardous waste. Learn more at [cityofpaloalto.org/hazwaste](http://cityofpaloalto.org/hazwaste).

### Spill Response

- Keep spill kit updated, labeled, and easily accessible. Include spill response plan/directions.
- Clean up surface residues that can wash into a storm drain inlet before rain events.
- Contain spills and protect nearby storm drain inlets immediately.
- Manage spills by dry-mopping or using absorbent material. Sweep up waste immediately with a broom or wet/dry mop and dispose of properly.

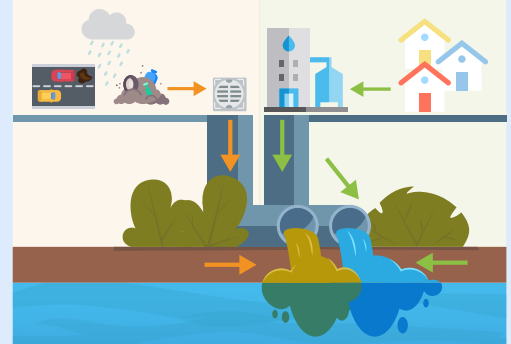
### Documentation and Record Keeping

- Keep maintenance and BMP training documentation on site and available upon request by City staff.

## Different Systems, Different Rules

Water from the storm drain system **is not treated** before entering the Bay.

Wastewater from homes and businesses **is treated** before entering the Bay.



There are two different drain systems for most businesses:

- (1) storm drains** are outdoors and carry stormwater runoff directly to local creeks and the Bay without treatment and
- (2) sanitary sewer drains**, often indoors, carry wastewater to a treatment plant before being discharged to the Bay.

Different regulations apply to these systems. For more information on stormwater, visit [CityofPaloAlto.org/Stormwater-Businesses](http://CityofPaloAlto.org/Stormwater-Businesses). For more information on requirements for sanitary sewer discharges, visit [CleanBay.org](http://CleanBay.org).