

March 2004



Alameda Countywide  
Clean Water Program  
A Consortium of Local Agencies

# Mobile Cleaners

*In response to recent Federal and State water quality regulations and requirements, municipalities in Alameda County have joined to form the Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program (ACCWP).*

**The ACCWP** consists of the Cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Dublin, Emeryville, Fremont, Hayward, Livermore, Newark, Oakland, Piedmont, Pleasanton, San Leandro, Union City, Alameda County, the Alameda County Flood Control and Water Conservation District, and Zone 7 of the District.

## **The Goal of the ACCWP**

*is to control discharges of pollutants to municipal storm drain systems (and local creeks and the San Francisco Bay). The ACCWP encourages using Best Management Practices to effectively eliminate illegal discharges and connections.*

**The Storm Drain System** was built to collect and transport rain to prevent flooding in urban areas. Anything that flows or is discharged into the storm drain system goes directly into local creeks or San Francisco Bay without any treatment.

**The Sanitary Sewer System** collects and transports sanitary wastes from interior building plumbing systems to the wastewater treatment plant where the wastewater is treated.

**Best Management Practices (BMPs)** are methods and practices such as good housekeeping, spill prevention, or treatment measures to prevent or minimize pollutant discharges to municipal storm drain systems.

## **Illegal Discharges or Illicit**

**Connections** discharge non-storm water to municipal storm drain systems and contribute to water pollution.

**Urban Runoff** is rain and any other water that passes through and out of developed areas (streets, parking lots, roof tops, etc.) into the storm drain system and eventually to creeks and other waters.

**K**eeping pollutants out of our storm drain system protects our local creeks, reservoirs, and San Francisco Bay. Materials swept, blown, or washed into the storm drains end up in these open waters where they degrade water quality and harm aquatic life. In general, washwater discharged to the storm drains is illegal. A few exceptions as described in the following table, are allowed to discharge when there are no pollutants.

In addition to reviewing their own practices, municipalities participating in the Alameda Countywide Clean Water Program (ACCWP) have instituted a business education campaign and inspection program. Inspectors work with contractors and businesses to identify and control potential discharge of pollutants to the storm drain system. *Property and business owners are responsible for their contractors' practices.*

Mobile cleaning activities generate significant quantities of washwater as a result of their washing operations at various sites. Washwater can contain dirt, debris, soap, oil, grease, acid solution, solvents, paint chips, metals, and/or food waste. Washwater discharged to the storm drain system contributes to urban runoff pollution. Even “biodegradable” cleaning agents may cause immediate damage to aquatic ecosystems.

All contractors and individuals who perform cleaning operations can apply common sense practices to minimize or eliminate their contribution to stormwater pollution. Some such practices are identified on the following pages.

If you need additional information concerning stormwater pollution and its prevention, contact your local program representatives at **1-510-670-5543**.



# Best Management Practices for Mobile Cleaning Activities

*The goal:* "Only rain in the storm drain."

*The strategy:* Keep pollutants from 1) contacting rain and; 2) being dumped, blown, swept, washed, or poured into storm drains.

Category/Activity	Washing or Washwater Conditions	Discharge Options			Best Management Practices (In Order of Preference)
		Storm Drains	Sanitary Sewer (1)	Landscaping/ Dirt Area (2)	
<b>I. TRANSPORTATION-RELATED WASHING</b>					
<u>Fleet Washing (Exterior)</u>	Removing mainly dirt: with or without soap	NO	YES	See notes 2 and 8	<u>Best:</u> use wash pads to capture washwater; discharge to sanitary sewer. <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> seal storm drains; collect washwater; discharge to sanitary sewer or dirt. (3)
<u>Engine/Equipment Degreasing</u> (Airplane, Auto, Truck)	With or without soap; may contain petroleum products and metals	NO	YES (Pretreatment rqd.)	NO	Use wash pads to capture washwater; drain/pump through pretreatment system before discharge to sanitary sewer (discuss requirements with wastewater agency).
<u>Acid Cleaning of Unpainted Trucks/Metal Containers</u>	Typically contains acid detergents	NO	YES (Pretreatment rqd.)	NO	Use wash pads to capture washwater; neutralize to pH between 6 and 10; discharge to sanitary sewer; contact wastewater agency for approval.
<u>Mobile Auto Detailing</u>	Infrequent, light cleaning; minimum water volume; removing mainly dirt with soap	NO	YES	See notes 2 and 8	<u>Best:</u> small volume may remain on paved surface to evaporate; if significant flow, seal storm drain and discharge to sanitary sewer. <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> direct flow onto dirt area.
<u>Car Sales Lot Rinsing for Dust Removal</u>	Light dirt, no soap or solvents	See note 4	YES	See note 2	OK to discharge to storm drain; keep runoff away from oil deposits.
<u>Semi Trailers and Boats</u> (Truck trailer, interior cleaning)	Food-related debris	NO	YES	NO	Sweep, collect and dispose of food residue in garbage; use dry cleaning methods; avoid hosing down trailer; discharge any washwater to sanitary sewer
	Trailer contained toxic substances	NO	NO	NO	If toxic materials spilled in trailer, use dry cleaning methods only – do not hose down; protect storm drains; contact Fire Department for guidance.
	Boat cleaning (including removal of paint chips)	NO	YES (Pretreatment rqd.)	NO	Filter washwater before discharge; dispose of paint particles properly (in garbage or as hazardous waste if contain lead, copper, TBT, or PCBs).
<b>II. SURFACE CLEANING (5)</b>					
<u>Sidewalks and Plazas</u>	Using Soap, no oil deposits	NO	YES	See notes 2 and 8	Sweep, collect and dispose of debris; direct discharge to sewer.
	No soap or oil deposits	YES	YES	See note 2	Sweep, collect and dispose of debris; may flow to storm drains.
<u>Sidewalks, Plazas, Driveways, Drive-Through Window Areas</u>	No soap, light oil, frequently cleaned	NO	YES	See note 2	Sweep, collect and dispose of debris; dry clean oil spots, dispose of absorbent in trash; place oil-absorbent boom around storm drain.
<u>Drive-Throughs, Driveways, Parking Garages, Service Stations</u>	With or without soap; excess oil deposits; <u>not frequently cleaned</u>	NO	YES	NO	Seal storm drains; sweep, collect and dispose of debris; dry clean oil spots, dispose of absorbent legally; discharge washwater to sanitary sewer, via oil/water separator if possible. Discuss with site operator and wastewater agency.

Category/Activity	Washing or Washwater Conditions	Discharge Options			Best Management Practices (In Order of Preference)
		Storm Drains	Sanitary Sewer (1)	Landscaping/ Dirt Area (2)	
<b>II. SURFACE CLEANING (continued)</b>					
<u>Building Exteriors and Walls</u>	Glass and steel buildings, no soap	YES	YES	See note 2	<b>Best:</b> direct washwater to dirt area. <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> direct flow to storm drain; protect drain with fabric filter if possible.
	Painted buildings (paint known to be lead free), no soap	YES	YES	See note 2	<b>Best:</b> direct washwater to dirt area. <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> protect drain with fabric filter to keep paint particles out of storm drain.
	Painted buildings with lead-based or mercury-additive paint, including cleaning for paint removal	NO	NO	NO	Seal storm drains and pump wash-water to a tank; water and sludge may need to be disposed of as hazardous waste. Consult with wastewater agency, County Health and Fire Department.
<u>Graffiti Removal</u>	Using wet sand blasting (with no baking soda)	YES	YES	See notes 2 and 8	Minimize quantity of water used. <b>Best:</b> direct washwater to dirt area. <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> filter through boom to keep sand out of storm drain or sewer.
	Using high pressure washing and cleaning compound	NO	YES	See notes 6 and 8	<b>Best:</b> seal storm drains; discharge washwater to sanitary sewer. Discuss with site operator and wastewater agency. <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> direct washwater to dirt area.
<u>Masonry Efflorescence</u>	Using acid wash to remove mineral deposits	NO	YES	See note 8	Seal/block storm drains. Collect washwater, neutralize to pH 6 to 10, discharge to sanitary sewer.
<b>III. FOOD RELATED CLEANING</b>					
<u>Restaurant Alleys, Grocery Dumpster Areas (outdoors)</u>		NO	YES	NO	<b>Best:</b> dry clean only (using rags, absorbents, sweeping debris). <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> dry clean first, seal storm drain, wash area, screen out particles, discharge washwater to sanitary sewer.
<u>Restaurant Cleaning of Floor mats, Exhaust Filters, Etc.</u>		NO	YES	NO	Washing mats outdoors and discharging washwater to storm drains is prohibited. <b>Best:</b> clean mats inside building and discharge to sink or floor drain. <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> clean mats outside in bermed area; discharge washwater to sanitary sewer.
<u>Kitchen Grease</u>	Recyclable oil, grease and meat fat	NO	NO	NO	Save for recycling in sealed containers; never pour into sink, floor or storm drain; do not mix with waste grease from trap.
	Grease from interceptor or trap	NO	NO	NO	Never dispose of waste grease in storm drain or sanitary sewer; contact disposal company.
<u>Grocery Carts</u>	Using soap	NO	YES	NO	Capture washwater; filter particles; discharge to sanitary sewer.
	No soap	YES	YES	See note 2	Pick up litter. <b>Best:</b> capture washwater; filter particles; discharge to sanitary sewer. <u>2<sup>nd</sup>:</u> discharge to storm drains through filter barrier (boom); hot water discharge to creek is prohibited.

Category/Activity	Washing or Washwater Conditions	Discharge Options			Best Management Practices (In Order of Preference)
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III. FOOD RELATED CLEANING (continued)					
<u>Lunch Wagons/Food Carts</u>		NO	YES	NO	Equipment should be cleaned on wash pad at commissary equipped to discharge washwater to sanitary sewer. Contact County Health. Only melted ice may drain to storm drain.
IV. MISCELLANEOUS CLEANING/OTHER ACTIVITIES					
<u>Mobile Homes, Decks, Roofs, Shingles, Awnings, Residential/ Commercial Pool Decks</u> (with paint known to be lead free)	Using Soap	NO	YES	See notes 2 and 8	Direct washwater to dirt area or to sanitary sewer.
	No Soap	See note 7	YES	See note 2	<u>Best</u> : discharge to dirt area. <u>2<sup>nd</sup></u> : discharge to storm drain through filter barrier (boom).
<u>Mobile Pet Care</u>	Using soap, topical medications and/or flea/tick control shampoos, dips and related pest control fluids.	NO	YES	NO	Filter wash water and properly dispose of fur/excess hair and other solids; discharge to sewer.
	No pest control fluids, topical medications, and soap/shampoo or conditioners.	NO	YES	See notes 2 and 8	Filter washwater and properly dispose of fur/excess hair and other solids, before discharging. <u>Best</u> : discharge to sanitary sewer. <u>2<sup>nd</sup></u> : direct washwater to landscaping/dirt area.

Area	Wastewater Agency
Cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland, or Piedmont	East Bay Municipal Utility District (EBMUD): 510/287-1651
Cities of Dublin or Pleasanton	Dublin-San Ramon Services District: 925/846-4565
Cities of Fremont, Newark, or Union City	Union Sanitary District: 510/477-7500
City of Hayward	510/881-7900
City of Livermore	925/373-5230
Communities of San Lorenzo, Castro Valley, unincorporated San Leandro and Hayward	Oro Loma Sanitary District: 510/276-4700
City of San Leandro	510/577-3401

- (1) "Discharge to sanitary sewer" means discharge into sink, toilet, or sanitary system cleanout. Approval of the wastewater agency is needed and may require: compliance with local regulations or limits; initial sampling; installation of pre-treatment equipment; payment of connection fee; and/or obtaining a wastewater discharge permit.
- (2) This option applies to minimal discharge flows only. Repetitive use or excessive waste volume to the same area may contribute to soil and contamination. Washwater may adversely affect landscaping; discuss with building owner.
- (3) If a significant amount of washwater evaporates from a paved surface at a site used routinely for washing, the paved area itself must be washed (and the washwater discharged to the sanitary sewer) either before October 15 (beginning of the rainy season) or at the end of the contract.
- (4) Permitted only for low flow volume, minimal discharge. Only exterior body cleaning; no cleaning the undercarriage or under the hood.
- (5) BMPs in this category do not apply if there has been an oil or other hazardous material spill on the site. In the case of a spill, contact the local fire department for guidance.
- (6) Washwater with cleaning compound may adversely affect landscaping; discuss with building owner.
- (7) Wood shingles may have been treated with a toxic material and should be dry cleaned only. Runoff from cleaning may be toxic to plants in a landscaped area. Washwater must be known to contain no toxic materials before discharge to the stormdrains is permitted.
- (8) If landscaped area contains a drainage system, discharge to landscaping may not be an acceptable option. Please contact your local clean water program.