



Building Maintenance and Cleaning Businesses

Make Clean Water Part of Your Business

Pollutants include phosphates, particulates, paint, concrete slurry, detergents and degreasers



Many pollutants such as paint, concrete, dry wall scraps and cleaning products associated with building maintenance activities can be carried by surface water runoff into streams and rivers or filter into groundwater. The impact to water quality from these activities can easily be avoided if they are done in an environmentally sensitive way. By evaluating some common practices, building maintenance and cleaning businesses can help residents and the local government protect water quality by limiting pollutants that may otherwise enter the storm drain system.

What's the Problem?

In urban environments, hard surfaces such as roofs, paved streets and sidewalks collect and hold surface pollutants. When it rains, or when these surfaces are hosed or washed off, the pollutants are carried into storm drains and the stormwater collection system. From there, they flow directly into waterways where they can harm fish, plants and wildlife, degrade recreational opportunities and taint downstream drinking water sources. In Eugene, these waterways include Amazon Creek, the Mill Race, Delta Ponds, and other smaller waterways that empty into the Willamette River or flow northwest into Fern Ridge Reservoir and the Long Tom River.

Your Business Can Help Protect Water Quality

Maintain your private drainage system with yearly catch basin inspections

Keep your worksite clean.

Keep potential pollutants covered.

Use a dumpster to dispose of scraps and empty containers.

Wash parts and equipment in designated areas that drain nontoxic or non-flammable materials to the wastewater collection system.

Prepare for and clean up spills.

Dispose of wastes properly according to label directions.

Reduce, reuse and recycle.

Use the least toxic products available.

If the work site or your business is near a stream or open drainage channel, preserve and protect streamside vegetation.

Typical building maintenance activities that can cause pollution include:

- Cleaning brushes, paint rollers, buckets, and paint sprayers with fluids that enter the storm drain or gutter.
- Depositing excess concrete or washing the concrete chute into the gutter or storm drain.
- Rinsing drywall equipment into the storm drain
- Hosing off paved areas using detergents, degreasers or other chemicals.
- Emptying wastewater from carpet and upholstery cleaning into the storm drain.



See the reverse side of this sheet for more specific clean water solutions.

Need more ideas or information?

Contact the City of Eugene's *Stormwater Information Office* at 541-682-2739

Report pollution complaints/stormwater discharge violations: 541-682-4800

Hazardous waste disposal—Lane County Waste Management: 541-682-5652

Clean Water Solutions

ACTIVITY	POLLUTION PREVENTION MEASURES
Use of chemicals including cleaners, preservatives, sealers, solvents and oils results in spills or waste for disposal	Place a pan to catch spills below areas where materials are transferred. Prepare for and clean up spills immediately. Use the least toxic materials available for the job. Dispose of according to local regulations, available from the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality* and Lane County**. Carpet cleaning wastewater must go into wastewater system, not a storm drain***
Painting and paint disposal	To eliminate waste, buy only what you need. Give leftover paint to the customer for touch up. Find ways to use up leftovers: — Give a wall an extra coat of paint. — Mix leftover latex paints together to use as a base coat. — Donate to theaters or community organizations to use for stage sets. Latex paint can be disposed of at a solid waste facility. Paint thinner and oil-base paint is disposed of through the Lane County business hazardous waste collection program**. Call ahead for details and to pre-register.
Sealing driveways	Sweep paved surfaces before rinsing and direct rinse water and driveway debris to lawns or planting areas, not toward the street or storm drain. Follow label directions. Use the least toxic materials available.
Washing—equipment, vehicles, building exteriors roofs and paved surfaces	Use the minimum volume of cleaning product necessary. Never use degreasers or detergents on paved areas that drain to the storm system. Recycle materials and dispose of non-recyclables properly. Establish an off-site wash area that drains to a sanitary sewer. Sweep or vacuum rather than pressure wash.
Storing waste and materials	Keep dumpsters and other waste containers covered, in good repair and free of leaks. Storage areas should be kept clean and free of unnecessary items. Storage containers should be kept in a covered area. Use secondary containment to prevent leaking material from draining to the stormwater system.
Preserving wood roofs	Debris such as moss, twigs, leaves or roof preservatives should not be allowed to enter storm drains. Divert debris to a settling area. Save leftover preservatives for future use. Triple-rinse containers (in an inside sink). Use the least toxic materials available for the job.
Educating employees	Inform employees about water quality impacts of their work activities and conduct trainings to prevent pollution. Post a spill control plan and procedures for preventing pollution. Offer employee incentives to protect water quality and properly manage and reduce the use of hazardous materials. Make sure workers who apply pesticides are state certified.
Educating customers	Educate customers about using alternative non-toxic products. Take the time to tell customers about your efforts to prevent water pollution and protect water quality. A “green” business is good for everyone.

* Oregon Department of Environmental Quality 541-686-7838

** Lane County Waste Management 541-682-3828

***Eugene/Springfield Wastewater, Industrial Pretreatment Program 541-682-8600