

GRAND CITIES COMMUNITY VEHICLE AND EQUIPMENT WASHING

Storm Water Management Activities Fact Sheet No. 5

Goal/Purpose

Short Term:

Minimize or prevent the discharge of pollutants into storm drains from vehicle- and equipment-cleaning operations by discharging to sanitary sewer, containing wash water for off-site disposal, or directing wash water (without cleaners) to landscape areas.

Long Term:

Implement a system for washing vehicles that has a center drain or a perimeter drain to catch any wash water. Conduct all washing and steam-cleaning operations with water that will be pretreated prior to release to the sanitary sewer system. Cover the drains when not in use to prevent rainwater from entering the sanitary sewer.

Storm Water Management Activities

To comply with the individual Grand Cities Community Storm Water Pollution Prevention Programs (SWPPPs), specific storm water runoff activities must be implemented at all local municipal facilities as required.

Activity:

1. Use a designated wash area that is paved and bermed or sloped such that wash water is contained and directed to a sump with a connection to the sanitary sewer. The wash area should either be covered or, when not in use, have a method to prevent rainwater from entering the sanitary sewer line during a storm event. The best location for a wash area prevents storm water runoff from contacting the wash pad surface. Improper washing practices can allow soaps and sediments from the cleaning process to contribute to the pollution of our rivers, streams, lakes, and groundwater.
2. Use a designated wash area that is paved and protected by permanent (or movable) berms, dikes, or mats. Wash water should not leave the contained area. If the wash area is an avenue for runoff, it should be bermed to contain the wash water for proper disposal.
3. Conduct rinsing on an unpaved area such as lawn or gravel with just water. Keep washing activities away from storm drains or water conveyances so that the rinse water will infiltrate into the ground and not flow directly to a storm conveyance system.
4. Conduct all steam-cleaning activities indoors or on a concrete pad that is bermed or sloped to contain the wastewater with a connection to an oil/water separator and sanitary sewer. The best location for a steam-cleaning area would not allow storm water from running over the pad, flushing the cleaning products and other pollutants into a storm water conveyance system.
5. Use phosphate-free, nontoxic, biodegradable soap. All soaps, including those labeled "biodegradable," should not be allowed to enter rivers, streams, lakes, or groundwater untreated. They are harmful to aquatic life and are not considered safe for direct disposal to any surface water conveyance system. Instead, let the wastewater treatment facility handle all soaps, detergents, and cleaning agents.
6. When available and cost-effective, evaluate the use of safer alternative

- products for any job that uses toxic or hazardous products.
7. Use as little water as possible during washing and rinsing operations and consider using a wash water-recycling system to eliminate the potential for polluted runoff.
 8. Promptly clean up any spill of liquid or solid wastes. Do not hose down an area to clean up a spill unless the liquid will be completely contained, cleaned up, and disposed of in the sanitary sewer or off-site as appropriate for the waste type. Do not discharge any liquid waste to storm drains, landscape, or pavement.
 9. Conduct regular inspections of the oil/water separators or holding sumps to ensure proper operation and compliance with the local sanitation discharge limitations.
 10. In the field, vehicles and equipment shall only be rinsed with clean water to wash off dirt and mud. This rinsing shall take place in a location to minimize any impacts to surface water runoff such as unpaved areas away from creeks and other storm water conveyances. Soaps or cleaners should not be used unless the wash water can be disposed of in a sanitary sewer.

If the above-suggested activities require some modification in order to work efficiently and effectively for you and your staff or do not cover some aspect of your operations or facility, please contact the appropriate Grand Cities storm water representative:

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For additional information on this or the local area community responsibilities under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II federal regulations for storm water discharges, visit the following Grand Cities Community Web sites:

City of Grand Forks:
<http://www.grandforksgov.com/gfgov/EnvironW.nsf/Main+Frameset?OpenFrameset>

City of East Grand Forks:
<http://www.ci.east-grand-forks.mn.us/>

Grand Forks County:
<http://www.co.grand-forks.nd.us/homepage.htm>

University of North Dakota:
<http://www.facilities.und.nodak.edu/stormwater.htm>

Produced by the Energy & Environmental Research Center (EERC) and supported by the EERC's Red River Water Management Consortium Storm Water Program.