



Tempe Environmental Bulletin

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Prevent Copper Pollution in Stormwater

The US EPA has identified urban stormwater runoff as a major contributor to the degradation of water bodies. In Tempe, most runoff ends up in the city's underground stormwater drainage system, which ultimately carries the untreated water to our urban lakes, rivers, parks, and, in some cases, eventually to our drinking water aquifers. Unfortunately, stormwater runoff can pick up various pollutants along the way and carry them to its final destination. Anything that enters the storm sewer system is released, untreated, into water bodies we use for swimming, fishing, and aquatic habitat, or into the ground, where it can contaminate groundwater supply. In Tempe's ongoing efforts to prevent polluted stormwater from getting into our surrounding environment, we are continually looking for new ways to identify and eliminate the stormwater pollution at the source. As a part of Tempe's Stormwater Management Program, we have identified a particular pollutant — copper — and ways we can all work together to keep this metal from getting into the stormwater system. We are asking our nonresidential customers to look at their sites to determine if they have opportunities to reduce copper discharges to stormwater. Some of the potential sources for copper discharges may include:

- Vehicle repair, body shop work, and vehicle cleaning — which may allow discharge from washing engines, flushing of radiators, and other metal-laden fluids.
- Architectural copper and roof shingles treated with algaecides
- Pool/spa/fountain algaecides
- Pesticides, algaecides, root killers, and fungicides for lawn treatment
- Industrial use of copper and outside storage of copper items
- Wood pressure-treated with pesticide chromated copper arsenate (CCA)
- Cooling Towers – In particular the practice of reusing non-contact cooling water, which elevates copper concentrations from treatment chemicals and the corrosion of cooling system components.

If you identify any of these, or other, potential sources of copper at your site, please employ Best Management Practices that help eliminate the release of copper to the stormwater system. If you have questions or need help, give us a call at (480) 350-2678. Visit our website for further Best Management Practices <http://www.tempe.gov/city-hall/public-works/water/stormwater/stormwater-tips>.

What Is Stormwater Smart?

“Be Stormwater Smart” and visit our website for Best Management Practices you can use to reduce the risk of adding pollutants to stormwater. <http://www.tempe.gov/stormwater>

You can also use this website to learn more about Tempe's Stormwater Management Program, to report illicit discharges to storm drains, or to file a stormwater related complaint.

Remember that it is a violation of the City of Tempe Code to cause or allow a non-stormwater discharge to a stormwater drain!

As required by Tempe's stormwater permit, Environmental Compliance Inspectors have significantly increased commercial and industrial stormwater inspections. If you would like to schedule an inspection at your facility, please call: (480) 350-2678.

