How Can You Help Keep the Environment Clean?

Having a clean environment is important to everyone. It impacts both our health and our economy.

Making sure that only rain goes to storm drains is something that everyone can do to make a difference in the quality of our environment.

Best management practices, or BMPs, are procedures that help to prevent pollutants like oil, gasoline, and antifreeze from entering our storm drains. Each of us can do our part to keep storm water clean by using the BMPs in this brochure.

What Else Can You Do?

Questions about what you can do to solve this or other storm water issues in our community? Call us at 480-350-4311

To report illicit discharges to storm drains, call (480) 350-2811 anytime, or go online to:
http://www.tempe.gov/stormwater

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Exterior Wash Water Best Management Practices

Mobile cleaning services generate significant quantities of wash water as a result of their cleaning activities at various sites. The category of mobile cleaning can include such activities as surface cleaning, graffiti removal, steam cleaning, and automotive and transport related washing. Wash water can contain dirt, debris, soap, oil, grease, acid solutions, solvents, paint chips, metals, pH and/or food waste.

Consider using off-site commercial washing and/or steam cleaning businesses.

These facilities are better equipped to handle and properly dispose of the wash waters.

- Use dry cleanup first. Before cleaning begins, sweep, shovel, and dispose of debris into trash container.
- Wash water is not allowed in the storm drain, street, or any other outside area.
- Ask your customer if you can discharge the wash water into the sanitary sewer (a toilet, sink, or clean-out) on the job site.
- Use a lint trap or filter when discharging to the sanitary sewer, dispose of the lint or fibers in the trash.
- If wash water is collected and transported from the wash site, it may discharge into the first stage of a sand/oil interceptor at your place (contractor's) of business.
- Untreated water may kill plants. Do not use it for landscape irrigation.
- Train employees on pollution prevention practices and post best management practices (BMPs) around service area and near customer areas.
- Use just enough pressure to do the job.
- Use minimal amounts and non-toxic detergents and degreasers.

Training

- Train personnel on the safety, use, and waste practices of chemicals and materials.
- Train personnel about storm water program and the requirements that your business must meet.

If a spill occurs:

- Stop the source of the spill immediately.
- Contain the liquid.
- Deploy containment booms.
- Cover liquid spills with absorbent materials.
- Dispose of cleanup materials properly.

Legally Speaking:

According to Chapter 12, Article VI: Storm Water Pollution Control, of the City of Tempe Ordinance Section 12-125(a), "Unless expressly authorized or exempted by this article, no person shall cause or allow the release to a public right-of-way or public storm drain system of any substance that is not composed entirely of storm water." In addition, fines may be imposed for violations, ranging from civil penalties of $300 to criminal fines of $2,500 per violation, per day and/or imprisonment.

Did You Know?

Storm water runoff in the City of Tempe is not treated, but goes directly into our lakes, rivers and parks. That is why it is important to ensure that pollutants do not end up in storm drains.
The primary purpose of storm drains is to carry rainwater away from developed areas to prevent flooding.

Water that washes over the earth can pick up a variety of contaminants that can run into lakes and streams directly or by way of the storm drain system. Everyday individual actions have the potential to create a significant impact on water quality in our community. The actions of an individual household or business might contribute small amounts of pollution; the combined effect of a neighborhood or community can have a serious cumulative effect.