

Stormwater Management

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES



Vehicle and Equipment Washing

Wash water from vehicle and equipment cleaning activities performed outdoors or in areas where wash water flows onto the ground can generate dry weather runoff contaminated with detergents, heavy metals, oils and greases, toxic substances, sediments, and other pollutants.

Releasing pollutants directly or indirectly into the storm drain system or the harbor by vehicle or equipment washing is a violation of the Harbor Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit. Proper employee training, BMP implementation, and pollution prevention methods are required for compliance with the Harbor's Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP).

BMP Implementation

Primary Option: Off-site Washing

Facilities with small fleets should consider contracting with a commercial car wash. Commercial car wash facilities often recycle their water or are required to treat their wash water discharge prior to release into the sanitary sewer system. Pressure cleaning and steam cleaning should be done off-site to avoid generating runoff with high pollutant concentrations.

Secondary Option: On-Site Washing

NOTE: ON-SITE WASHING IS ALLOWED ONLY AFTER WASHING PROCEDURES ARE SUBMITTED TO THE HDOT HARBORS DIVISION FOR FORMAL APPROVAL

Vehicle and equipment washing should be conducted only in designated areas specifically designed to collect and hold generated wash and rinse water.

*"For small jobs, berm the area surrounding the vehicle and use a wet/dry vacuum to capture the wash water for discharge to the sanitary sewer. For larger jobs, use a combination of berms and a vacuum truck, such as those used to clean storm and sanitary sewer systems, to capture and safely dispose of wash water. If detergents are used, clean the pavement to prevent this material from being carried to the storm drain during the next rainstorm."*¹

The contained wash water effluent should be recycled, discharged to the sanitary sewer system (permit may be required) or collected for off-site disposal at a permitted facility. Additionally, designated wash areas should be paved and contained using berms and a sump. Use hose nozzles with automatic shut off and bio-degradable soaps where appropriate. Inspect paved surfaces within the wash area and clean periodically to remove buildup of particulate matter or other pollutants. Vehicle maintenance, chemical storage, and other activities that could release pollutants are prohibited in washing areas. Train employees on proper cleaning, maintenance, and wash water disposal procedures. Documentation of this training should include a list of attendees, the date, the topic covered, and signatures of attendees.

¹ EPA Municipal Vehicle and Equipment Washing BMP Fact Sheet

The State Department of Transportation, Harbors Division has developed the Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP) in compliance with the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) and the State of Hawaii Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) General Permit requirements.

The SWMP is administered by the Environmental Section under the Engineering Branch.

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