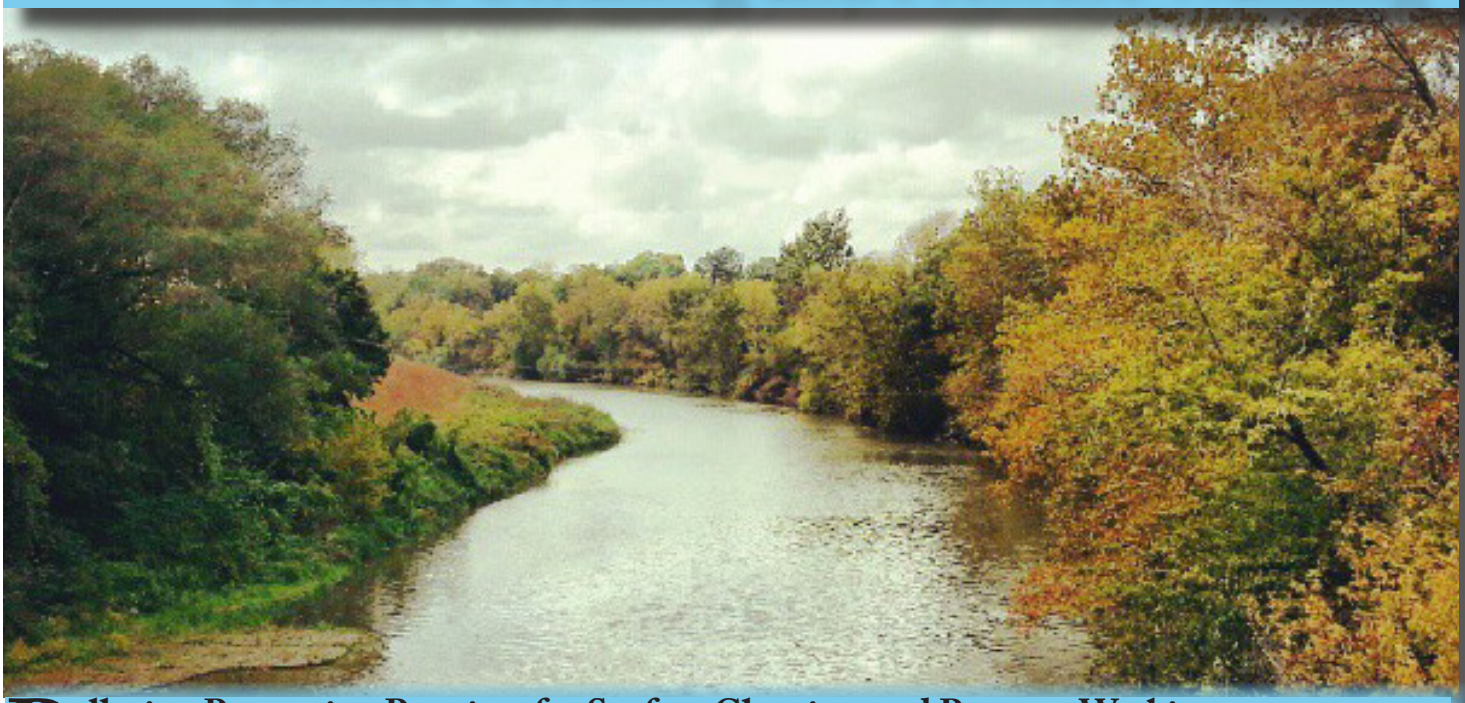
Stormwater Management Fact Sheet

Muncie/Delaware County/Yorktown

Surface Cleaning and Pressure Washing



Pollution Prevention Practices for Surface Cleaning and Pressure Washing

This fact sheet provides information on the use of Best Management Practices (BMPs) for surface cleaning activities that must be used to protect water quality and to comply with regulatory requirements. These requirements and BMPs apply to anyone who generates wastewater from surface cleaning, including:

- **Contractors that provide surface cleaning service to others**
- **Businesses that wash surfaces and equipment as part of their operations or maintenance**
- **Homeowners**
- **City and County Employees**

Any substance, including surface cleaning wastewater that enters the storm drain system flows directly into lakes, rivers, and streams.

Discharging pressure washing generated wastewater into the storm drainage system violates municipal, state, and federal stormwater regulations.

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Most surface cleaning activities are conducted outside. This often results in the discharge of wastewater to the storm drain, unless the operator takes steps to collect and dispose of it properly. Discharge of surface cleaning wastewater to the storm drain is prohibited because it contains pollutants from the objects or surfaces being cleaned and/or from the cleaning compounds being used. Even cleaners labeled "biodegradable" and "nontoxic" may be harmful to aquatic life, especially after cleaning various surfaces (e.g. dumpster areas, parking lots, equipment and more) that contain fats, oils, grease, metals, chemicals (such as herbicides, insecticides, pesticides, solvents, anti-freeze, and fertilizers) as well as other substances.

To improve the quality of water we fish and swim in, not to mention drink, Federal and State regulations prohibit discharges of pollutants to water bodies without a permit. Because of these regulations, most cities and counties are subject to a Municipal Stormwater (MS4) Permit issued to them by the State of Indiana. The Municipal Stormwater Permit requires local agencies to implement programs to reduce pollutants in stormwater runoff and to effectively prohibit non-stormwater discharges.

As required by the Municipal Stormwater Permit, our community has adopted a Stormwater Ordinance that prohibits illicit discharges. **The discharge of many types of wastewater from surface cleaning to the storm drain system is prohibited by this ordinance.**

SURFACE CLEANING AS PART OF THE SOLUTION

Pressure washing is an activity that can help improve the quality of our waters when done properly. By cleaning surfaces (e.g. equipment, parking lots, sidewalks, buildings, etc.), collecting wastes (water and/or debris), and properly disposing of the wastes, there is less chance of pollutants ending up in our waterways. It is through education, proper collection, and disposal that pressure washing can have a positive impact on the environment.

WASTEWATER DISPOSAL REQUIREMENTS AND PROHIBITIONS

To be in compliance with environmental regulations, proper disposal of surface cleaning wastewater depends on the nature of the pollutants in the wastewater. It is the responsibility of the generator to determine the proper collection and disposal method for this wastewater. To avoid unanticipated costs, delays, and violations, this determination should always be made prior to starting any job. All disposal methods are subject to requirements, restrictions, and prohibitions outlined below.

Storm Drains

Discharging surface cleaning wastewater, into any natural body of water or any stormwater conveyance system such as storm drains, ditches, and gutters is prohibited by Federal, State, and local laws.

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Exceptions to this prohibition include the following:

1. Soapless wastewater from sidewalk and plaza cleaning provided the surface is pre-swept and free of significant pollutants (e.g. free of visible oils and grease).

2. Soapless wastewater from building surfaces without loose paint.

These exceptions only apply when landscape infiltration is not practicable and wastewater does not violate water quality standards for receiving waters.

Evaporation

Surface cleaning wastewater that contains visible debris or residue, soap, detergent or other cleaning agents, hazardous waste, or excessive amounts of any pollutant, may not be left on paved surfaces to evaporate because the residues will eventually be discharged to the storm drain system.

Sanitary Sewer

Disposal of surface cleaning wastewater to the sanitary sewer must meet the requirements of the local Sanitation Sewer Agency. Please refer to your local jurisdictions treatment plant for more information.

Hazardous Waste

Depending on the condition of the surface being cleaned, the wastewater generated could be classified as hazardous waste. Some examples include:

- Wastewater generated from parking lots, storage areas, and gas stations may contain oil, gas, solvents, antifreeze, metals, and/or pesticides.
- Washing building exteriors with paint made prior to 1978 may contain lead.

Generating hazardous waste may dramatically increase your operating costs and limit your disposal options. Refer to our website at www.munciesanitary.org/recycling/hazardous-waste/ for more information on hazardous waste determination and disposal.

Surface Pre-Cleaning

Consider using dry methods for surface pre-cleaning, such as using absorbents on small oil spots and sweeping up trash, debris, dirt, and used absorbent before wet washing. The use of dry cleaning methods will significantly reduce the amount of wastewater generated and therefore reduce operating costs. Waste materials from dry cleanup such as absorbents, paint chips, etc. may often be disposed of in the trash.

Pressure Washing

- Minimize the amount of water used during pressure washing activities. This will reduce the volume of wastewater that will need to be disposed.
- Avoid using cleaning products that contain hazardous substances (e.g. hydrofluoric acid, muriatic acid, sodium hydroxide, bleach, etc.) that can turn wastewater into a hazardous waste.
- Acidic, caustic, and detergent cleaners may damage paved or coated surfaces.
- Wastewater with high pollutant concentrations, including wastewater that contains cleaning compounds, must be completely collected and may not be left to evaporate.

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Landscape Infiltration

Wastewater may be collected and discharged or directed onto landscaped and/or dirt areas only when the wastewater does not create a nuisance condition or contain food products or contaminants (i.e. solvents, cleaners, oils, metals, etc.) that may constitute a hazardous waste.

In addition, such discharges must soak into the ground and may not flow into the storm drain. Make sure to obtain permission from the property owner prior to discharging or diverting wastewater to landscapes and/or dirt areas.

Wastewater Collection

- Identify locations of all storm drains.
- Locate high and low-spots and determine the area where wastewater can be pooled for collection.
- Common equipment used for containing and collecting wastewater generated during pressure washing activities include: **vacuum pumps, booms/berms, portable containment areas, weighted storm drain covers, oil/water separators, holding tanks, portable sump pumps, absorbents, and more.**
- Avoid mixing non-hazardous wastewater with wastewater known to contain hazardous levels of pollutants. This may increase the volume of waste that requires treatment and/or disposal as a hazardous waste, thus increasing disposal costs.
- Place an oil-absorbent mat/pad on top of collected wastewater to help reduce the amount of oil redeposited on the surface of the collection area.
- Wastewater can be treated with an oil absorbent boom or oil/water separator to decrease the concentration of oil in the wastewater and a filter may be used to decrease the amount of solids in the wastewater.
- Once wastewater has been collected and/or discharged to the sanitary sewer system, visible solids remaining in the collection area must be swept up to prevent subsequent discharge to the storm drain system.

Wastewater Disposal

All wastewater discharged into the sanitary sewer must meet the requirements of the local sanitation agency and may require obtaining pre-approval prior to disposal. Please consult with the local sanitation agency regarding disposal requirements.

Types of containment

- **Berms**
- **Stormdrain covers/mats**
- **Containment pools**
- **Vacuums/pumps**
- **Inflatable pipe plugs**

INFORMATION USED BY PERMISSION

Best Management Practices for Pressure Washers, Sacramento County Business Environmental Resource Center, November 2002.

Pollution from Surface Cleaning, Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association, 1996

Mobile Cleaner Best Management Practices, Cleaning Equipment Trade Association, September, 1994