



Stormwater Management and Spill Response for Restaurants

Good management practices at restaurants can help to keep local water resources clean. Improper waste disposal and cleanup procedures, however, can cause significant problems when pollutants are allowed to flow into local streams, rivers and lakes. Follow the simple management strategies below to help protect your facility and local water resources.

Stormwater Pollution Prevention Opportunities

Spill Response

It's always best to prevent spills inside and outside of the restaurant, but be prepared to deal with them if they do occur. Keep spill containment kits in areas of the restaurant where spills are likely to occur, including exterior areas near dumpsters and unloading areas. If a spill does occur, don't hose the material into the storm drain. Instead, clean it with rags or absorbent material such as kitty litter and then properly discard the used spill material. All employees should be trained on proper spill containment and cleanup procedures.

Cleaning Procedures

Conduct all equipment washing and cleaning activities inside of the restaurant to ensure the wastewater is collected in floor drains or sinks. Clean restaurant supplies and equipment (including floor mats, exhaust filters, garbage cans, carts, and tray racks) in an area that drains to a grease trap or interceptor and then to the sanitary sewer. Wash water that contains soap, bleach, or disinfectants should also be discharged to a mop sink or to the sanitary sewer - never outside where the contaminated wastewater can enter a storm drain. All outside wastewater must be contained, captured, and disposed of in the sanitary sewer system.

Dumpster Management

Place the restaurant dumpster in a secure location to discourage illegal dumping and place it on a flat concrete surface where leaks won't flow in the direction of nearby storm drains. Install a containment system such as a berm or curb around the dumpster to contain leaks, spills, and trash. Keep lids securely closed to prevent rainfall or snowmelt from mixing with the trash, to deter unwanted wildlife, and to avoid offensive smells.

Never place hazardous waste, liquid waste, oil, grease, or leaky garbage bags in the dumpster. Avoid hosing out the dumpster interior and never use bleach or soap to clean the dumpster unless the wash water is diverted to a sanitary sewer system. Inspect the dumpster on a regular basis, at least once a month. If leaks are detected, replace the dumpster as soon as possible to avoid the flow of liquid waste into nearby storm drains.

COMMON TERMS

STORMWATER is precipitation or snowmelt that doesn't soak into the ground. Instead, it becomes surface runoff, which flows through storm drains to local waterways such as streams, rivers, lakes and wetlands. Along its route, the water picks up and transports pollutants from impervious surfaces such as roofs, parking lots, and roads. The goal of stormwater management is to protect surface and groundwater resources by reducing the flow rate and composition of the runoff.

STORM DRAINS that are normally found in parking lots and along streets are designed to gather and transport stormwater to local waterways. Storm drains don't remove pollutants from stormwater. They simply transport the runoff and discharge it to local waterways. Only unpolluted water such as precipitation and snowmelt should be allowed to enter a storm drain.

Unlike storm drains, **SANITARY SEWERS** collect wastewater from indoor areas such as toilets, sinks, dishwashing machines, and floor drains. The wastewater is then transported to a sewage treatment plant where the pollutants are removed.

With proper training and education regarding waste disposal, cleanup activities, and spill response, restaurant personnel can help to improve the water quality in nearby waterways.