

Stormwater Pollution Prevention

What is storm water and why is it a concern?

Stormwater runoff is rain water and snow melt that runs off the land and enters streams, rivers and lakes. Runoff from outdoor production activities or material storage areas may contain a variety of pollutants that can degrade the quality of streams and pose threats to human health. As a small business, you can do your part to protect our waters by taking steps to prevent storm water pollution. As an owner or manager you are closely involved in your community. One way to be a good neighbor is to be a good steward of natural resources, including local streams and rivers.

What can I do about cleaning?

Water from outdoor cleaning of items such as kitchen mats, grease traps, and trash cans must not enter a storm drain. It should be contained or directed to a sanitary sewer drain. Use a broom instead of a hose to clean sidewalks and parking lots. Use absorbents to soak up spills. Create a spill plan, post it in a visible spot and communicate this to your employees. Have spill absorbing products stored ready to use in a marked location.



Dumpsters, dumpsters everywhere

Keep your dumpsters closed and ask your hauler to exchange it, if it has a damaged lid or is leaking. Never put liquid waste in dumpsters. Check that the drainage hole has a plug in place. Know what qualifies as a hazardous waste and make arrangements for its proper disposal. Ohio EPA's Division Hazardous Waste Management can be reached at (614) 644-2621.



Avoid storage issues

Anything stored outside must be properly covered. A waterproof awning or tarp may be all you need. Keep drums and bottles tightly closed and check regularly for leaks. Liquids should be stored on an impervious surface with a berm for secondary containment.



Tips on How to Properly Maintain Your Catch Basin

Catch basins are storm or sewer drains, often located on private property, that are used to collect rainfall and keep the streets free of flooding. Catch basins are fairly easy to care for. With proper drainage and an adequate grate, your catch basin can work without issue for years to come. Your catch basin is most likely to be successful, however, with a little bit of regular care. Here are just a few tips to keep in mind that can help you keep your catch basin in tip-top shape:

- **Avoid filling it with the wrong things:** One way that you can keep your catch basin clear and operating correctly is by keeping potentially hazardous objects and substances out of it. For instance, you should never let oils or caustic substances go down the drain. Parking lots are notorious for the accumulation of cigarette butts, plastics and other items left behind by litterers. Periodic sweeping will prevent these from entering the stormwater system. Additionally, you should work to keep large pieces of lawn waste or animal carcasses out of the basin.
- **Keep the grates clear:** If anything is blocking your catch basin, it won't be able to drain water effectively from your property. Be sure to keep the grates of your catch basin clear at all times. In fall, for instance, it's fairly common for large collections of leaves to form a barrier on top of the grate that could prevent the catch basin from doing its job.
- **Remove debris:** Your catch basin should have a small collection area at the bottom that gathers leaves, twigs and other forms of debris. Be sure to remove this debris frequently—it's especially likely to accumulate following large storms with heavy wind and rainfall. In winter, avoid piling snow on top of the storm drain grates.

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