

Preventing Pollution: It's Up to Us

In the Santa Clara Valley, storm drains transport water directly to local creeks and San Francisco Bay without treatment. Stormwater pollution is a serious problem for wildlife dependent on our waterways and for the people who live near polluted streams or baylands. Some common sources of this pollution include spilled oil, fuel, and fluids from vehicles and heavy equipment; construction debris; sediment created by erosion; landscaping runoff containing pesticides or weed killers; and materials such as used motor oil, antifreeze, and paint products that people pour or spill into a street or storm drain.

Thirteen valley municipalities have joined together with Santa Clara County and the Santa Clara Valley Water District to educate local residents and businesses and fight stormwater pollution. Join us, by following the practices described in this pamphlet.

Doing the Job Right

General Business Practices

- Protect stockpiles and landscaping materials from wind and rain by storing them under tarps or secured plastic sheeting.
- Store pesticides, fertilizers, and other chemicals indoors or in a shed or storage cabinet.
- Schedule grading and excavation projects during dry weather.
- Use temporary check dams or ditches to divert runoff away from storm drains.
- Protect storm drains with sandbags or other sediment controls.
- Revegetation is an excellent form of erosion control for any site.

Storm Drain Pollution from Landscaping and Swimming Pool Maintenance

Many landscaping activities expose soils and increase the likelihood that earth and garden chemicals will run off into the storm drains during irrigation or when it rains. Swimming pool water containing chlorine and copper-based algaecides should never be discharged to storm drains. These chemicals are toxic to aquatic life.

Landscaping/Garden Maintenance

- Use pesticides sparingly, according to instructions on the label. Rinse empty containers, and use rinsewater as product. Dispose of rinsed, empty containers in the trash. Dispose of unused pesticides as hazardous waste.
- Collect lawn and garden clippings, pruning waste, and tree trimmings. Chip if necessary, and compost.
- In communities with curbside pick-up of yard waste, place clippings and pruning waste at the curb in approved bags or containers. Or, take to a landfill that composts yard waste. No curbside pickup of yard waste is available for commercial properties.
- Do not blow or rake leaves, etc. into the street, or place yard waste in gutters or on dirt shoulders, unless you are piling them for recycling (allowed by San Jose and unincorporated County only). Sweep up any leaves, litter or residue in gutters or on street.
- In San Jose, leave yard waste for curbside recycling pickup in piles in the street, 18 inches from the curb and completely out of the flow line to any storm drain.



Pool/Fountain/Spa Maintenance

Draining pools or spas

When it's time to drain a pool, spa, or fountain, please be sure to call your local wastewater treatment plant before you start for further guidance on flow rate restrictions, backflow prevention, and handling special cleaning waste (such as acid wash). Discharge flows should be kept to the low levels typically possible through a garden hose. Higher flow rates may be prohibited by local ordinance.

- Never discharge pool or spa water to a street or storm drain; discharge to a sanitary sewer cleanout.
- If possible, when emptying a pool or spa, let chlorine dissipate for a few days and then recycle/reuse water by draining it gradually onto a landscaped area.
- Do not use copper-based algaecides. Control algae with chlorine or other alternatives, such as sodium bromide.

Filter Cleaning

- Never clean a filter in the street or near a storm drain. Rinse cartridge and diatomaceous earth filters onto a dirt area, and spade filter residue into soil. Dispose of spent diatomaceous earth in the garbage.
- If there is no suitable dirt area, call your local wastewater treatment plant for instructions on discharging filter backwash or rinsewater to the sanitary sewer.

Small Business Hazardous Waste Disposal Program

Businesses that generate less than 27 gallons or 220 pounds of hazardous waste per month are eligible to use Santa Clara County's Small Business Hazardous Waste Disposal Program. Call (408) 299-7300 for a quote, more information or guidance on disposal.

Palo Alto operates a similar program, with monthly collection, for small businesses. Call the City of Palo Alto, (650) 496-6980, or Greenfield Services Corporation, 1-800-433-5060 for information or to schedule an appointment.

This brochure is one in a series of pamphlets describing storm drain pollution prevention measures for specific types of construction industry activities. Other pamphlets include:

General Construction and Site Supervision

Painting and Application of Solvents and Adhesives

Fresh Concrete and Mortar Application

Roadwork and Paving

Earth-Moving Activities and Dewatering Activities

Heavy Equipment Operation

Home Repair and Remodeling

For additional brochures, call **1-800-794-2482**.



**Santa Clara Valley
Urban Runoff
Pollution Prevention Program**

Spill Response Agencies:

1. In the City of Santa Clara, call (408) 984-3080.
2. In the City of Palo Alto, call (650) 329-2413.
3. In the City of San Jose, Dial 9-1-1 if hazardous materials enter the storm drain system. For non-hazardous spills, call (408) 945-3000.
4. In other cities, **DIAL 9-1-1**
5. State Office of Emergency Services Warning Center (24 hours). **1-800-852-7550**
6. Santa Clara County Environmental Health Services.(408) 299-6930

Local Pollution Control Agencies

- County of Santa Clara
Pollution Prevention Program. . . .(408) 441-1195
- County of Santa Clara Integrated Waste
Management Program. (408) 441-1198
- County of Santa Clara District Attorney
Environmental Crimes Hotline. . . (408) 299-TIPS
- Santa Clara County
Recycling Hotline.1-800-533-8414
- Santa Clara Valley Water
District. (408) 265-2600
- Santa Clara Valley Water
District Pollution Hotline. 1-888-510-5151
- San Jose/Santa Clara Water
Pollution Control Plant. (408) 945-3000
*Serving Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos,
Milpitas, Monte Sereno, San Jose, Santa
Clara, Saratoga*
- Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant
Serving Sunnyvale. (408) 730-7270
- Regional Water Quality
Control Plant.(650) 329-2598
*Serving East Palo Alto Sanitary District, Los
Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo
Alto, Stanford*
- Regional Water Quality Control Board
San Francisco Bay Region. (510) 622-2300

Landscaping, Gardening, and Pool Maintenance

Best Management Practices for the Construction Industry



Who should use this brochure?

- Landscapers
- Gardeners
- Swimming pool/spa service and repair workers
- General contractors
- Home builders
- Developers
- Homeowners