# Good Housekeeping

Outdoor areas, parking areas and private storm drains can be a major source of pollutants, such as trash, debris, heavy metals, oil and grease. These materials can be hazardous to San Diego residents and our environment if they are allowed to enter the storm drain system and eventually end up in local waterways.

## Outdoor Areas


Outdoor activities often generate debris or waste liquids or increase the risk of outdoor spills. You can help reduce pollution and improve water quality by using the following tips as part of your daily clean up and maintenance routine:

- Move activities indoors (SDMC §131.0520(c) and §131.0620(c)) or cover and contain areas where traditional outdoor activities are performed.
- Protect outdoor work areas from upstream runoff and prevent spills or by-products from escaping contained areas by using berms or curbs.
- Do not conduct activities when it is raining.
- Sweep, mop or vacuum outdoor areas daily to minimize pollutant accumulation.
- Do not allow fine sediments such as sawdust, sanding dust, soils, plastic or metal shavings to leave your property.
- Protect storm drain inlets from debris and wash water runoff.
- Provide trash cans and recycling bins with lids as well as cigarette butt receptacles to collect waste and discourage littering.
- Install additional treatment control devices, such as drain inserts, swales or bioretention structures to remove pollutants from runoff.

### STORMWATER REGULATIONS

It is illegal to discharge pollutants from outdoor areas, parking areas and private storm drains, such as trash, sediment or debris into the Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) (San Diego Municipal Code §43.0304). Penalties associated with these violations can be up to $10,000 per day per incident.

# Parking Area Maintenance

Parking areas, including private roads and driveways, should be cleaned regularly, as necessary. This helps to control and reduce accumulated sediment, metals, oil, grease and other materials that may end up in the City's storm drain system. Impervious pavements such as parking lots, private roads and private driveways shall be swept at least once per year using street sweeping equipment (mechanical, vacuum, or regenerative air) or by hand. Conditions may require more frequent sweeping. It is recommended that cleaning occur in the dry season (May 1 through September 30). If wet methods (e.g., pressure washing) are used, all water must be contained, captured and disposed of appropriately. See *Pressure Washing* fact sheet.

- Water during cooler times of the day (before 10 a.m. and after 6 p.m.).
- Adjust sprinklers to stop overspray and runoff.
- Make needed repairs immediately.
- Use drip irrigation, soaker hoses or micro-spray systems.
- Use an irrigation timer to pre-set watering times.
- Switch to a water-wise landscape - native plants need less fertilizers, herbicides, pesticides and water.

Areas not subject to the annual sweeping requirement:

- Covered areas not exposed to rainfall
- Paved areas that drain to a bioretention or infiltration area or other high efficiency treatment control structure, sized in accordance with the City's Land Development Manual requirements for Priority Development Projects
- Areas paved with pervious pavement (e.g., porous concrete, porous asphalt, ungrouted pavers or gravel)

# Private Storm Drains

Keep onsite storm drain inlets, drains and channels free of sediment, trash and debris. Maintenance of private systems is the responsibility of the property owner. Storm drains shall be cleaned if more than half of the bottom of the catch basin is covered with materials, or if the enforcement officer directs it. Accumulated materials should be cleaned at least once per year. Use dry methods first, such as sweeping, scraping or use of a vacuum truck.

# Keep Pollutants Out of Storm Drains

Many people think that when water flows into a storm drain it is treated, but the storm drain system and the sanitary sewer system are not connected. Everything that enters storm drains flows untreated directly into our creeks, rivers, bays, beaches and, ultimately, the ocean. Stormwater often contains pollutants – including chemicals, trash and vehicle fluids – all of which pollute our beaches and harm fish and wildlife.

Whether at home or work, you can help reduce pollution and improve water quality by using the above Best Management Practices as part of your daily cleaning and maintenance routine.