

# Watershed Protection Tips



## Building & Grounds Maintenance - Surface Cleaning

### Building & Grounds Maintenance Surface Cleaning Including:

- Sidewalks
- Storefronts
- Parking Lots
- Signage
- Outside dining/eating areas

### How Does Surface Cleaning Affect the Watershed?

Wash water from surface cleaning operations can transport contaminants including oil, chemicals, heavy metals, and cleaning products that can easily run into nearby storm drains. You are responsible for preventing this from happening.

### Best Management Practices for General Surface Cleaning

- Use dry cleaning techniques whenever possible and properly dispose of the debris in the garbage.
- Wash without soaps or solvents.
- Use the least toxic materials possible for graffiti removal.
- Whenever water is used to clean heavily soiled areas:
  - Cover access to storm drains to prevent sediment, chemicals and waste waters from entering the storm drain system.
  - Contain and capture wash water for discharge in a sanitary sewer or back into landscaping.
  - Screen wash water to catch debris.
- Always protect storm drains from runoff when performing a service nearby.
- Clean oily spots with absorbent materials. Sweep and dispose of residuals in the trash.

### Best Management Practices for Pressure Washing Surface Cleaning

- When pressure washing on or around paved surfaces, dispose of water in the sanitary sewer and debris in the garbage.
- When pressure washing through grassy areas whether using soap or not, runoff must be dispersed as sheet flow rather than a stream. The runoff must remain on the grass and not drain onto pavement.

### What Is Our Watershed?

Our watershed is the total land area from which stormwater drains into streams, rivers or other bodies of water. The storm drain system is a vast network of gutters, pipes and open channels designed for flood control, which directs untreated stormwater away from our communities. It is both illegal and harmful to allow solid or liquid wastes, including organic materials of any kind, into the storm drain system.

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The Watershed Should  
Only Shed Water

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### Surface Specific Best Management Practices

#### Sidewalks/Storefronts

- Sweep and collect litter, yard debris and dirt regularly to minimize the need for cleaning with water.

#### Parking Lots

- Sweep all parking lots at least once before the rainy season.
- Provide trash receptacles to discourage littering.
- Use sand filters or oil absorbent collectors for small amounts of oily waste.

#### Signage

- Use runoff control devices such as drop cloths, filter fabric and storm drain covers to prevent dust, grit, wash water and other pollutants from escaping the work area.

For more information on preventing stormwater pollution call:

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