

Starting a New Business?

As a new business, it is important to consider the potential impact of your activities on local creeks, rivers and the ocean.

Pollutants discharged to local creeks, rivers and the ocean during storms or through illegal dumping significantly contribute to water pollution, and harm to aquatic life. In response to Federal and State regulations and requirements, municipalities in San Diego County have joined to form a Countywide Clean Water Program. In addition to reviewing their own practices, municipalities in San Diego County have launched a public education campaign and inspection program.

Inspectors work with new and existing businesses to identify and control potential discharge of pollutants to the storm drain system. All businesses can implement common-sense Best Management Practices (BMPs) to reduce or eliminate their contribution to storm water pollution. Most BMPs involve modest changes to routine operations and maintenances practices. Implementing BMPs can save you time and money by preventing potential violations. The information on the reverse side of this page identifies some activities that contribute to storm water runoff pollution as well as appropriate BMPs to control or eliminate these discharges.

A particular concern for new businesses is that all drains be properly plumbed. In general, only rain is allowed in the storm drains. If possible, proper disposal of wastewater should be considered before buying or leasing a site, to avoid expensive re-plumbing. Most wastewaters must discharge to the sanitary sewer system. If you don't know where a drain discharges, contact a qualified plumber or utility locator for help.

An El Cajon Storm Water Program representative can help you determine where the drain should discharge. You can also get help on how to redirect the discharge if it needs to be changed.

For more information, call the El Cajon Storm Water Protection Program at (619) 441-1653.



Business Best Management Practices

You can control pollutant discharges to the storm drain by implementing common sense housekeeping measures also called Best Management Practices (BMPs). The objectives are to keep pollutants from contacting rain, and keep pollutants from being dumped or poured into the storm drains. The goal is to eliminate storm water pollution by placing “only rain in the storm drain.” Will your business:



- Store any raw materials?
- Generate trash, waste materials or wastewater?
- Use or maintain vehicles?
- Use or maintain equipment outside?
- Transfer any liquids to containers transported to or from your site?
- Carry out any remodeling activities to your site?
- Or do any washing activity outdoors?

If the answer to any one of these questions is yes, you need to consider the first group of BMPs listed below. You will also need to consider the second group of BMPs during normal business activities when your business is operational.

BEFORE YOU LEASE OR BUY, consider the following:

- Is a sanitary hookup readily available?
- Will an onsite treatment system be required by the local wastewater treatment agency prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer?
- If floor mats, equipment or vehicles need to be cleaned, is a wash pad or enclosed area that is plumbed to the sanitary sewer available?
- Is there sufficient room inside buildings for storage of raw materials, waste materials, equipment or parts?
- Are other methods readily available for protecting outdoor materials from rainfall?
- Are the material transfer areas (for example, loading docks, receiving areas, etc.) covered or protected from rain?
- Are you prepared to protect inlets and storm drains in case of a spill?

DURING NORMAL BUSINESS ACTIVITIES, implement the following BMPs:

- Store all materials and stored trash in areas protected from rain, runoff and wind.
- Keep all storage containers free from cracks and leaks.
- Keep all work areas clean and free from trash and debris.
- Establish a Spill Clean-Up Plan for liquid and solid materials, and use dry cleaning methods rather than pressure washing materials to the storm drains.
- Handle all materials carefully to avoid spills.
- All wastewater from manufacturing, cleaning, and washing must be either contained and recycled or disposed to the sanitary sewer. The wastewater may have to be treated to remove pollutants prior to discharge to the sanitary sewer. Contact your local wastewater treatment agency for their requirements.
- Wash floor mats, equipment and vehicles in a designated and/or covered area where wash water is collected for recycling or for discharging to the sanitary sewer.
- Dispose of all wastes properly. Recycle whenever possible.