

Storm drains are engineered to gather and transport storm water to our local waterways.

Storm drain systems are not designed to remove pollutants; therefore only unpolluted water should be discharged to a storm drain.

Power washing and mobile cleaning activities can harm the environment if proper disposal and cleanup procedures are not followed. By using the correct techniques, power washing personnel can prevent contaminants from entering storm drains, thus helping to improve the water quality in neighboring waterways.



**STORMWATER
Management Program**
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Only Rain Down the Drain!

**County Public Works
Storm Water Management Program
County Government Center
976 Osos St. Room 206
San Luis Obispo, CA 93408**

Phone: 805-781-5256
To Report Spills: 805-781-5544
Website: www.yourstormwater.org

Power Washing and Mobile Cleaning Best Management Practices

Prevent Water Pollution



**STORMWATER
Management Program**
COUNTY OF SAN LUIS OBISPO

Review the power washing and mobile cleaning techniques noted in this brochure that should be used to avoid polluting our streams, creeks, and ocean in San Luis Obispo County.



Use the Right Product

- Whenever possible, purchase water-based cleaning products. Look for products labeled 'non-toxic,' 'ammonia-free,' 'phosphate-free,' or 'non-toxic biodegradable.'
- Please note: even biodegradable cleaners can be toxic to aquatic life. Soapy water entering the storm drain can impact fish and other wildlife within hours.

Location, Location, Location

- NEVER dispose of any wash water into the street, a storm drain, drainage ditch, or waterway.

- PRIOR to power washing, block all storm drains with an impervious barrier such as gravel bags or berms, or seal storm drains with plugs or rubber mats. Make sure you do not flood the area or adversely affect vehicle or pedestrian traffic.



- Create a containment area with berms and tarps or take advantage of low ground to keep wash water contained on site. Then pump or vacuum up all wash water in the contained area.
- Wash vehicles and equipment on grassy or gravel areas so that the wash water can seep into the ground. Do not wash equipment or vehicles outdoors on days when rain is possible since rain could cause the wash water to runoff into the street and/or storm drain.

Use Dry Clean Up Methods

- Instead of pressure washing, determine what alternative dry methods are available.
- Use mops, brooms, rags or wire brushes to clean pavement, buildings, and equipment as much as possible.

- Remove, collect, and dispose of loose debris and seal before applying water.

Proper Disposal

- When mobile cleaning, discharge the wash water into the sanitary sewer through an interior building drain, sink, or private sewer clean-out. Discharges to the sewer must not contain any hazardous materials, or any grease, oils, or fats because they clog piping.
- When power washing, if using water only with no soap or additives, pump or pour the water onto landscaped areas that will not run off onto a sidewalk, street, or a storm drain.
- Sediments and other solids remaining on the ground should be swept or vacuumed up immediately so they don't wash into the storm drain system during a rain event, even if rain is months away.

Just Enough For the Job

- Minimize water use by using high pressure, low volume nozzles.
- Use the minimum amount of the least toxic detergents and degreasers you need to complete the job. Use mops or rags to clean heavily soiled areas before power washing and hours of these centers, see www.iwma.com.

