

BMPs for PRESSURE WASHING



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Did you know...

- Most pressure washing activities are conducted outside.
- This can result in the discharge of wastewater to the storm drain system.
- Discharge of pressure washing wastewater is prohibited because cleaning chemicals and pollutants from surfaces being cleaned can enter and pollute streams, lakes and rivers.



Even 'biodegradable' and 'nontoxic' cleaners can be harmful!



What is Pressure Washing?

Pressure washing is used to clean automobile fleets, parking lots, building exteriors, heavy equipment, and restaurant equipment.

Pressure washing equipment is also used for stripping paint and preparing and treating many other surfaces.

Pressure washing equipment creates a high pressure stream of water. Pressure washing may be conducted with hot or cold water, and/or added cleaners.

Pressure washing is used by contractors providing a service, businesses or municipalities that use pressure washing as part of their operation or maintenance, and homeowners.

Remember, whatever is rinsed from a dirty surface becomes wastewater, or polluted runoff.

Wastewater can contain motor oil, heavy metals, antifreeze, air conditioner condensate and the toxic de-greasers used in the pressure washing process.

Pressure washers generate 10,000 to 20,000 gallons of wastewater per 100,000 to 150,000 ft² of surface area cleaned!

Discharges prohibited to storm drains listed in Section 301 of the Clean Water Act include wastewater from commercial pressure washing activities.

Contractors should be aware that washing areas with pooled liquids



Cleaning dumpster and parking lot areas can wash oils, grease and chemicals into nearby streams and lakes.

or surfaces with lead-based paint may generate hazardous wastes, which can significantly raise costs of disposal.

Residential users should be encouraged to comply with best management practices.

Providing educational resources statewide to communities and other groups to inform and educate local stakeholders.



BMPs for Pressure Washing

Planning

- Determine what wastewater collection method will be used and how you will dispose of the wastewater generated for each cleaning activity.
- Obtain all necessary authorizations.
- Contact your local Wastewater Treatment Authority to find out if you can discharge to the sanitary sewer system.
- Identify the specific location where you will dispose of wastewater (on-site sanitary sewer, waste treatment plant).
- Be sure to obtain the property owner's permission to dispose of wastewater on-site.

Pre-Cleaning

- Consider using dry methods, such as using absorbents on oil spots or sweeping up trash and debris before pressure washing.
- Be aware of costs and requirements of disposing of pre-cleaning waste that may be identified as hazardous waste.
- Properly dispose of dry waste.

Minimize

- Minimize the amount of water used when pressure washing, reducing the volume of wastewater that needs to be disposed.
- Avoid using cleaning products that contain hazardous substances (muriatic acid, bleach, sodium hydroxide etc.).
- When possible, use only water to clean surfaces.

BMPs

Berms

Berms may be used to prevent wastewater from entering a storm drain by placing a protective barrier around the storm drain inlet.



Storm Drain Covers/Mats

These devices are placed on top of the storm drain cover grate, creating a quick seal, thus preventing wastewater from entering the storm drain system.

Containment Pools

A portable or temporary containment pool is another option which may be used by pressure washers to collect wastewater.



Vacuums/Pumps

Devices such as wet/dry vacuums, sump pumps, and vacuum pumps may be used to collect wastewater after pressure washing.

Vacuum Boom

Vacuum booms are an attachment for the vacuum device. The boom rests flush on the ground and draws wastewater through holes on the bottom of the boom.



Inflatable Pipe Plug

Inflatable pipe plugs prevent wastewater from entering a storm drain system by blocking the pipe leading from the drain inlet. An inflatable pipe plug is inserted into the storm drain pipe and uses the inlet structure beneath the grate to collect the wastewater.

Please do your part to protect Iowa's streams and lakes!