



Fact Sheet



BMPs facilitate regulatory compliance; they go beyond meeting established minimum requirements. They are ways of carrying out your business activities that can significantly reduce the risk of pollution and may even save you money. They're good for the environment, your customers, and your business.

COMPLIANCE

State law mandates that local agencies set minimum standards to protect the sanitary sewer and storm drain systems. This Fact Sheet includes minimum standards for regulatory compliance set by CCCSD and by your city's Stormwater Ordinance. Failure to comply with these minimum standards can result in citations and possible fines.

Storm Drains and Sanitary Sewers

Different Systems, Different Rules

There are two types of drain systems for most businesses: (1) storm drains that carry water directly (untreated) to local creeks and bays; and (2) sanitary sewer drains that carry water to a treatment plant for cleaning before being discharged to the water environment. Different regulations apply to these two different systems.

MINIMUM STANDARDS

Storm Drains

Outdoor drains usually lead to the storm drain system.

Allow only rain down the storm drain.

It is illegal to have an indoor drain or other indoor plumbing that is connected to a storm drain or empties outdoors.

Significant fines can be levied for dumping or allowing the flow of pollutants into the storm drain system.

Sanitary Sewers

CCCSD prohibits the following materials from entering the sanitary sewer system:

- Anything that poses a threat to human health or harms or interferes with the collection or treatment system.

- Flammable or explosive substances.
- Substances with a pH of less than 5.5 or more than/equal to 11.5 pH units.
- Hot water (more than 150 degrees F. where it enters the collection system).
- Storm water or unpolluted ground water unless authorized by a permit.
- Hazardous waste.
- Other materials prohibited by Title 10 of the CCCSD Code.



Allow only rain down the storm drain.

All businesses must comply with CCCSD discharge limits for other pollutants such as copper, mercury, other metals and oil and grease.

Grease traps or sand-oil interceptors (oil/water separators) must be inspected and maintained regularly.

It is illegal to connect an outdoor drain to the sanitary sewer system without special approval from CCCSD.

Contents of dead-end sumps must be disposed of appropriately. If hazardous materials enter the sump, the contents must be managed and disposed of as hazardous waste.

BMPs

Identify all the drains at your facility. Find out where the drains go (sanitary sewer, dead-end sump, or storm drain system).

Label storm drains using stencils available from your city.



Make sure employees know the rules

Ensure employees know that only rain belongs down storm drains.

Train employees about allowable discharges to sanitary sewers. When in doubt, keep it out.

Put reminder signs above sinks (for example: “No vehicle fluids or solvents down drain”).

Assume sump contents are hazardous and treat them as hazardous waste unless determined otherwise.

Minimize the types and volume of hazardous materials stored on site.

ABOUT THIS FACT SHEET

This fact sheet is one of a series created by CCCSD to help businesses understand why and how to prevent water pollution. The contents are informational and summary in nature and do not constitute legal advice. For more information, call CCCSD’s Source Control Section at (925) 229-7288, or visit our web site at www.centernalsan.org

For more information on hazardous waste requirements, call the Contra Costa County Health Services - Hazardous Materials Programs at (925) 335-3200.

Other regulatory agencies you may wish to contact include:

Contra Costa County Fire Protection District
San Ramon Valley Fire Protection District
Bay Area Air Quality Management District