

# Preventing Pollution: It's Up to Us

In the Santa Clara Valley, storm drains transport water directly to local creeks and San Francisco Bay without treatment. Stormwater pollution is a serious problem for wildlife dependent on our waterways and for the people who live near polluted streams or baylands. Some common sources of this pollution include spilled oil, fuel, and fluids from vehicles and heavy equipment; construction debris; sediment created by erosion; landscaping runoff containing pesticides or weed killers; and materials such as used motor oil, antifreeze, and paint products that people pour or spill into a street or storm drain.

Thirteen valley municipalities have joined together with Santa Clara County and the Santa Clara Valley Water District to educate local residents and businesses to prevent stormwater pollution. Join us, by following the practices described in this pamphlet.

## Doing the Job Right

### General Principles

- Keep an orderly site and ensure good housekeeping practices are used.
- Maintain equipment properly.
- Cover materials when they are not in use.
- Keep materials away from streets, storm drains and drainage channels.
- Ensure dust control water doesn't leave site or discharge to storm drains.
- Clean up any materials that do leave your site. For example, if sediment from the site is in the street you should sweep the street and review site exit BMPs and/or perimeter controls.
- Train your employees and subcontractors. Make these brochures available to everyone who works on the construction site. Inform subcontractors about stormwater requirements and their own responsibilities.

### Storm Drain Pollution from Construction Activities

Construction sites are common sources of storm water pollution. Materials and wastes that blow or wash into a storm drain, gutter, or street have a direct impact on local creeks and the Bay.

**As a contractor, or site supervisor, owner or operator of a site, you may be responsible for any environmental damage caused by your subcontractors or employees.**

### Advance Planning and Permitting

- Schedule excavation and grading activities for dry weather periods.**
- In addition to local grading and building permits, you will need to obtain coverage under the State's General Construction Activity Stormwater Permit if your construction site will disturb one (1) acre or more of soil. Information on the Construction General Permit can be obtained from the State Water Quality Control Board's website:  
[http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/water\\_issues/programs/stormwater/construction.shtml](http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/water_issues/programs/stormwater/construction.shtml).

### Erosion and Sediment Control

- To reduce soil erosion, plant temporary vegetation or place other erosion controls before rain begins. Refer to the *CASQA Construction BMP Online Handbook* ([www.casqa.org/resources/bmp-handbooks](http://www.casqa.org/resources/bmp-handbooks)) for proper erosion/sediment control measures.
- Control the amount of runoff crossing your site** (especially during excavation) by using berms or drainage ditches to divert water flow around the site. Reduce stormwater runoff velocities by constructing temporary check dams or berms where appropriate.
- Protect storm drain inlets receiving runoff from construction area with devices such as, but not limited to gravel bag barriers and geotextile storm drain inserts.

### Good Housekeeping Practices

- Designate one contained area for vehicle parking, vehicle refueling, and routine equipment maintenance. The designated area should be located away from streams or storm drain inlets, and bermed if necessary. Make major repairs off site.
- Keep materials out of the rain – prevent runoff contamination at the source. Cover exposed piles of soil or construction materials with plastic sheeting or temporary roofs.
- Keep pollutants off exposed surfaces. Place trash cans and recycling receptacles around the site to minimize litter.
- Clean up leaks, drips and other spills immediately so they do not contaminate soil or groundwater or leave residue on paved surfaces. Use dry cleanup methods whenever possible. If you must use water, use just enough to keep the dust down.
- Cover and maintain dumpsters. Check frequently for leaks. Place dumpsters under roofs or cover with tarps or plastic sheeting secured around the outside of the dumpster. A plastic liner is recommended to prevent leakage of liquids. Never clean out a dumpster by hosing it down on the construction site.
- Place portable toilets away from storm drains. Make sure portable toilets are in good working order. Check frequently for leaks.

### Materials/Waste Handling

- Practice Source Reduction -- minimize waste when you order materials. Order only the amount you need to finish the job.
- Dispose of all wastes and demolition debris properly. Many construction materials and wastes can be recycled, including solvents, water-based paints, vehicle fluids, broken asphalt and concrete, wood, and cleared vegetation. Materials and debris that cannot be recycled must be taken to an appropriate landfill or disposed of as hazardous waste. Never bury waste materials or leave them in the street or near a creek or stream bed.

## Small Business Hazardous Waste Disposal Program

Businesses that generate less than 27 gallons or 220 pounds of hazardous waste per month are eligible to use Santa Clara County's Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Disposal Program. Call (800) 207-8222 for a quote, more information or guidance on disposal.

Palo Alto operates a similar program, with monthly collection, for small businesses. Call the City of Palo Alto, (650) 496-6980, or Clean Harbors, 1-800-433-5060 for information or to schedule an appointment.

This brochure is one in a series of pamphlets describing storm drain pollution prevention measures for specific types of construction industry activities. Other pamphlets include:

### ***General Construction and Site Supervision***

### ***Landscaping and Gardening***

### ***Painting and Application of Solvents and Adhesives***

### ***Roadwork and Paving***

### ***Earth-Moving and Heavy Equipment Operation***

### ***Dewatering Activities***

### ***Home Repair and Remodeling***

For additional brochures, call **1-800-794-2482**



Last Updated: January 2015

## Spill Response Agencies:

1. In the City of Santa Clara, call (408) 615-3080.
2. In the City of Palo Alto, call (650) 329-2413.
3. In the City of San José, dial 9-1-1 if hazardous materials enter the storm drain system. For non-hazardous spills, call (408) 945-3000.
4. In other cities, find the contact number at [www.scvurppp-w2k.com/report\\_spill.shtml](http://www.scvurppp-w2k.com/report_spill.shtml) or **DIAL 9-1-1**
5. State Office of Emergency Services Warning Center (24 hours). . . . . **1-800-852-7550**
6. Santa Clara County's Illegal Dumping/ Discharge Hotline. . . . .(408) 918-3400

## Local Pollution Control Agencies

County of Santa Clara Integrated Waste Management Program. . . . .(408) 282-3180

County of Santa Clara District Attorney Environmental Crimes Hotline. . . . (408) 299-TIPS

Santa Clara County Recycling Hotline. . . . .1-800-533-8414

Santa Clara Valley Water District. . . . .(408) 265-2600

Santa Clara Valley Water District Pollution Hotline . . . . . 1-888-510-5151

San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility. . . . . (408) 635-6600  
*Serving Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Monte Sereno, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga*

Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant  
*Serving Sunnyvale. . . . .(408) 730-7270*

Regional Water Quality Control Plant. . . . .(650) 329-2598  
*Serving East Palo Alto Sanitary District, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Stanford*

Regional Water Quality Control Board San Francisco Bay Region. . . . .(510) 622-2300

# General Construction and Site Supervision

*Best Management Practices (BMPs) for Construction*



## Who should use this brochure?

- General contractors
- Site supervisors
- Inspectors
- Home builders
- Developers