

# Auto Dealers



This Fact Sheet provides Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are recommended for facilities that buy, trade and/or sell automobiles.

## POTENTIAL POLLUTANT SOURCES

The following activities are potential sources of pollutants:

- ▶ Minor automobile servicing
- ▶ Cleaning Floors
- ▶ Washing cars
- ▶ Parking lot cleaning

Pollutants may include:

- ▶ Heavy metals (copper, lead, nickel, and zinc)
- ▶ Hydrocarbons (oil and grease, PAHs)
- ▶ Toxic chemicals (solvents, chlorinated compounds, glycols)
- ▶ Acids and alkalis

## POLLUTION PREVENTION

Using pollution prevention measures may reduce or eliminate the need to implement other more costly or complicated procedures.

The following pollution prevention principles apply to most facilities:

- ▶ Use alternative, safer, and/or recycled products;
- ▶ Reduce storm water flow across the site and redirect flows away from storm drains, gutters, and streets.
- ▶ Reduce the use of water and/or use dry methods;
- ▶ Recycle and reuse waste products and waste flows; and
- ▶ Provide on-going employee training.

## BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AND PROCEDURES

### *General*

- ▶ Vacuum or sweep. Do not wash shop floors or adjacent outdoors areas. Never discharge wash water into storm drains, gutters, or streets.
- ▶ Maintain your facility grounds. Move or cover activities and materials to prevent contact with storm water.
- ▶ Inspect and clean leaks and drips routinely. Use absorbent for spills, dispose of properly.
- ▶ Label drains within your facility boundary to indicate whether they flow to an oil/water separator, directly to the sewer, or to a storm drain.



## ***Minor Automobile Servicing***

### **Maintenance and Repair Work**

- ▶ Conduct maintenance and repair work only in designated areas with spill containment.
  - ❖ Construct berms or intercept trenches at doorways to prevent the run-on of uncontaminated storm water from adjacent areas as well as stormwater runoff.
  - ❖ Avoid working over asphalt and dirt floors which can absorb vehicle fluids.
- ▶ When removing or changing vehicle fluids, do so inside or under cover, if possible, to prevent the run-on of storm water and the runoff of spills.
- ▶ Always use a drip pan under the vehicle while unclipping hoses, unscrewing filters, or removing other parts. Use a drip pan under any vehicle that might leak.
- ▶ Promptly transfer used fluids to the proper waste or recycling drums. Do not leave drip pans or other open containers out in the open.
- ▶ Change motor oil or perform equipment maintenance only in designated areas.
- ▶ Use a tarp, ground cloth, or drip pans beneath the vehicle or equipment to capture all spills and drips if temporary work is being conducted outside. Collected drips and spills must be disposed, reused, or recycled properly.

### **Cleaning Floors**

- ▶ Use dry cleaning methods (i.e., sweeping, vacuuming) to prevent the discharge of pollutants to gutters, storm drains and streets.
- ▶ If cleaning agents are used, select less toxic, biodegradable products.
- ▶ If wash water does not contain soap or other cleaning agents, discharge to a pervious surface. If wash water contains soaps or other cleaning agents and can not be pumped to the sanitary sewer, it may need to be disposed of as hazardous waste.

### **Washing Cars**

- ▶ Use off-site commercial washing businesses, if feasible.
- ▶ Designate and clearly mark an impervious indoor or outdoor area to be used solely for vehicle washing.
- ▶ Design wash area to collect and properly dispose of wash water and/or effluent generated.
  - ❖ Install sumps or drain lines to collect wash water.
  - ❖ Construct berms around the area to collect wash water and prevent storm water run-on.
  - ❖ Use portable containment and vacuum to collect the wash water.
- ▶ If the wash area is outdoors, cover the area when not in use.
  - ❖ Collect all wash water from vehicle cleaning operations and discharge to a sanitary sewer through an approved sand/oil separator (call the City of Stockton, Environmental Control Office at 937-8740 for disposal approval).
  - ❖ Do not discharge wash water to sanitary sewer until contacting the local sewer authority to find out if pretreatment is required.
  - ❖ Install a water recirculation/reclamation system, if feasible.
- ▶ Use less toxic, biodegradable, phosphate-free detergents. Remember, even though these detergents are better, the wash water still needs to be discharged to the sanitary sewer, with approval.
- ▶ Provide trash containers in wash area and empty on a regular basis. Use recycle bins.
- ▶ Use hoses with nozzles that automatically turn off when left unattended.
- ▶ Do not degrease the engine in the wash area. Take the vehicle to an off-site facility that can process the wastewater.

### **Parking Lot Cleaning**

- ▶ Regularly inspect the storage yard for full drip pans and leaking equipment.
- ▶ Provide an adequate number of litter receptacles and recycle bins. Clean out and cover litter receptacles frequently to prevent spillage.
- ▶ Clean oil/water/sand separators regularly, especially after heavy storms.
- ▶ Establish a parking lot sweeping frequency based on usage and waste accumulation.
- ▶ Sweep all parking lots at least once before the onset of the rainy season.

- ▶ Use dry cleaning methods (i.e., sweeping, vacuuming) to prevent the discharge of pollutants into gutters, storm drains and streets.
- ▶ If water or cleaning agents are used for cleaning (even biodegradable cleaners) :
  - ❖ Block the storm drain or contain runoff.
  - ❖ Wash water should be collected and pumped to the sanitary sewer through an approved sand/oil separator or discharged to a pervious surface. Keep wash water from entering storm drains, gutters, or streets. If wash water does not contain soap or other cleaning agents, discharge to a pervious surface.
  - ❖ Dispose parking lot sweeping debris and dirt in the trash.
- ▶ When cleaning heavy oily deposits:
  - ❖ Use absorbent materials on oily spots prior to sweeping or washing.
  - ❖ Dispose used absorbents appropriately.
  - ❖ Vacuum/pump discharges to a tank or discharge to a sanitary sewer (with approval).

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### **Spill Control**

- ▶ Develop and maintain a spill response plan.
- ▶ Place an adequate stockpile of spill cleanup materials where it will be readily accessible.
- ▶ Spot clean leaks and drips routinely.
- ▶ Clean leaks, drips, and other spills with as little water as possible. Use rags for small spills, a damp mop for general cleanup, and dry absorbent material for larger spills.
- ▶ Remove the absorbent materials promptly and dispose of properly.
- ▶ Keep the spill from entering the street, gutter, or storm drain.

### **EMPLOYEE TRAINING**

- ▶ Train employees on these practices
- ▶ Train staff on the proper maintenance of the facility.
- ▶ Train employees on proper spill containment and cleanup procedures.
- ▶ Establish a regular training schedule for employees, and conduct annual refresher training.
- ▶ Use a training log or similar method to document training.

City of Stockton 937-8700

***Water that goes into storm drains doesn't go to the sewer plant to be treated,  
but flows directly into our rivers, creeks, sloughs, and the Delta.  
Remember: Only Rain Down the Storm Drain!***