



DENTAL OFFICES

It is illegal to allow anything other than rain water to be discharged to a storm drain.

The two biggest pollutants of concern coming from dental offices are mercury and silver. Vacuum lines, sinks and toilets all lead to local sewer lines, so anything you pour down the drain goes to a Treatment Plant and has a potential to be discharged. Because Treatment Plants may not be designed to remove metals like mercury and silver, control of any discharges is required. If spilled or disposed of improperly these contaminants can harm the public and local aquatic life and health.

Individuals and businesses that improperly handle and dispose of materials are both subject to civil and criminal prosecution.

HOW ARE THE STORM DRAIN AND SANITARY SEWER SYSTEMS DIFFERENT?

Throughout urban communities, the storm drain system transports rainwater to local creeks, rivers, and the ocean. This system was created to prevent flooding within communities and homes.

All water and materials that enter the storm drain system is untreated.

The sanitary sewer is a plumbed system that transports used water from buildings to a wastewater collection and treatment facility, where the water and sewage is treated.

If you see an outdoor drain and are unsure of its use, assume it is a storm drain and do not discharge wash water to it.

Clean creeks are important. They provide vital fish habitat, recreation, and add to the beauty of our city.

WASTEWATER DISCHARGE PERMIT REQUIREMENTS

All dental practices are required to install an amalgam separator unless the conditions for exemption are met.

- Check your local jurisdiction for discharge requirements.
- Contact your local County administered Household Hazardous Waste program or collection facility for more information and locations.
- For more information about obtaining a Wastewater Discharge Permit. Contact your local Wastewater authority.

RELEASING MERCURY OR SILVER INTO THE SANITATION SYSTEM IS VIOLATION OF LOCAL MUNICIPAL CODE.

CONDITIONS FOR EXEMPTION

A facility may be exempt from installing an amalgam separator if amalgam fillings are removed or placed three (3) or fewer days per year and the facility serves the following primary function:

- Orthodontics
- Periodontics
- Oral and maxillofacial surgery
- Radiology
- Oral pathology or oral medicine
- Endodontics
- Prosthodontics

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPS)

- Maintain amalgam separator as needed.
- Use pre-capsulated amalgam. Discontinue use of bulk liquid mercury.
- Change chairside traps frequently. Store traps and contents as amalgam waste. Never rinse traps in the sink.
- Change wet vacuum pump screen as needed. Seal plastic container and all contents with screen and store with amalgam waste. Never rinse contents down the drain.
- Segregate amalgam-containing waste. Do not include with medical “red bag” waste, regular solid waste, or general office recycling containers. Red bag waste is especially problematic as a receptacle for amalgam waste as it is generally incinerated, which volatilizes mercury. Store amalgam waste in air-tight containers, following your waste hauler’s instruction.
- Properly dispose of x-ray fixer using a licensed waste hauler. Never pour fixer down the sink.
- Avoid bleach and other chlorine-containing products when cleansing vacuum system.
- Train staff in the proper handling and disposal of amalgam and x-ray waste. Maintain a training log.
- Maintain disposal logs for amalgam and x-ray fixer waste.

Releasing pollutants into the storm drain system or a waterway is prohibited by local ordinance, state, and federal law.

For an emergency or a spill involving hazardous materials or hazardous waste call 911 or your local Fire Department.

For All Non-Emergency / Non-Hazardous Spills

- To report a Non-Hazardous spill, or for other useful phone numbers, see Spill Numbers informational reference sheet for your local agency contact information or visit:
www.streetstocreeks.org/spill-numbers/



HAVE QUESTIONS?

Use the QR code to find your local stormwater contact or visit:
mcstoppp.org/illegal-discharge-contacts



www.mcstoppp.org

(415) 473-6528

mcstoppp@marincounty.org

www.StreetstoCreeks.org