



## PAINTERS

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

Painters products (paint, solvents, paint removers) and processes (preparation, painting, and clean-up) can introduce pollutants into our environment. If spilled or disposed of improperly, paints, solvents, paint chips, and sanding debris can be harmful to water quality and creek habitats.

Individuals and businesses that improperly handle and dispose of non-stormwater materials down the storm drain 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.

### BEST PRACTICES: JOB PREPARATION

- Check the weather; Avoid work outdoors if rain or high wind is forecasted.
- Paint stripped with any chemical must be disposed of as hazardous waste.
- Process water and paint stripped by a power-washer must be collected in a tank and strained/filtered to remove all paint chips prior to disposal to a sanitary sewer.
- When Power Washing any surface, refer to the "Power Washer Guidelines" document and/or your local municipality for requirements and regulatory compliance.
- Lead based paints (or paint applied prior to 1972) are considered hazardous materials and require special permitted procedures.
- Paint chips and dust from non-hazardous dry stripping and sand blasting must be swept up and disposed of as trash.
- Chips and dust from marine paints or paint containing lead or tributyl tin are hazardous wastes; dry sweep. Check with your local County administered Household Hazardous Waste program or collection facility for more information and locations for proper disposal.
- Be prepared. Have materials on hand to contain paint spills. This may include materials such as a squeegee; dustpan; large bucket; rag; storm drain inlet protection; wet/dry vac to collect the runoff from rinsing down any spill area.

## DO IT RIGHT

- Cover and protect unused or left-over paint.
- Set-up and operate on tarps or drop cloths for easier clean-up of spilled material, including areas for paint preparation and storage, painting, and clean-up.
- When transporting paint, make sure containers are securely tied in the vehicle to prevent costly spills on the roadway.
- Reuse paint thinner by setting thinner aside in a closed jar to settle out paint particles, and then pour off clear liquid for future use. Dispose of residue as hazardous waste.
- Recycle excess water-based (latex) paint. Contact your local County administered Household Hazardous Waste program for requirements.
- Recycle empty, dried-out, water-based paint cans in your blue single-stream recycling cart.

## CLEAN UP

- Clean up spills immediately.
- Never hose paint down a street gutter, or storm drain.
- Water-based paints, brushes, rollers, and spray equipment can be cleaned in a bucket or sink and discharged to the sanitary sewer.
- Brushes, rags, and drop cloths may be placed in the garbage if they are not saturated or heavily soiled with oil-based paint or other flammable/combustible materials. If they are saturated – or heavily soiled – they must be brought to the hazardous waste collection facility.
- Oil-based paints and solvent cleaners must be treated as hazardous waste.

## ARE YOU READY TO RESPOND TO A SPILL?

- Have a written plan.
- Train employees annually on storm water regulations, spill response, personal safety, and hazardous waste handling and disposal.
- Have spill cleanup materials onsite.
- Have Safety Data Sheets for all products used.

## HOUSEHOLD HAZARDOUS WASTE PHONE NUMBERS

Commercial operations, including maintenance companies, may qualify to dispose of hazardous chemicals for a fee through the Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Program.

For more information and locations: Contact your local County administered Household Hazardous Waste program for requirements.

**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/](http://www.streetstocreeks.org/spill-numbers/)



## HAVE QUESTIONS?

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



[www.mcstoppp.org](http://www.mcstoppp.org)

(415) 473-6528

[mcstoppp@marincounty.org](mailto:mcstoppp@marincounty.org)

[www.StreetstoCreeks.org](http://www.StreetstoCreeks.org)