



Stormwater Compliance Guide for Auto Repair & Maintenance

What every Auto Shop Owner or Manager should know...



It is important for auto repair shop owners, managers and employees to know that the discharge of pollutants from their shop's activities, either directly or indirectly, into the storm drain, or surrounding water bodies, is prohibited by Columbus' Stormwater Ordinance (UDO 7.12.3) and by State and Federal Law.

Pollutants of concern at auto repair facilities include **anti-freeze, motor oil and other automotive fluids**. Cleaning products, brake dust, and oil and grease from automobile parts are also significant pollutants.

As of December 31 2003, the City of Columbus is required by the State of Georgia's Environmental Protection Division to conduct stormwater compliance inspections at auto repair shops and other businesses that have the potential to pollute our waters. The suggestions in this information packet can help your business prepare for such an inspection.

Please review and familiarize yourself with the following shop management tips in order to help avoid violations that could result in fines.

Changing Oil and Other Fluids

- ✓ Whenever possible, change vehicle fluids indoors and only on floors constructed of nonporous materials. Avoid working over asphalt and dirt surfaces that absorb vehicle fluids.
- ✓ If vehicle fluids must be removed outdoors, always use a drip pan. Prevent accidental spills from reaching the street or storm drain by working over an absorbent mat or working in a bermed area. If necessary, you can use absorbent socks to create a bermed area.
- ✓ Transfer fluids drained from vehicles to designated waste storage areas as soon as possible. Drain pans and other open containers of fluids should not be left unattended, especially outdoors.
- ✓ Store wastes or bulk fluids within secondary containment to prevent leaks and spills from reaching the storm drain system.
- ✓ Never pour vehicle fluids or other hazardous wastes into storm drains, sewers, or into dumpsters where they could leak out. These substances should be kept in designated waste storage containers until recycled or disposed of properly.
- ✓ Drain fluids from leaking or wrecked vehicles as soon as possible. Use drip pans under leaking vehicles to capture fluids.

Parts Cleaning and Radiator Flushing

Solvents are hazardous to employees and can ignite in sewers. Handle and dispose of these materials properly.



- ✓ Eliminate discharges from these operations to the storm sewer system or sanitary sewer. Use a licensed service to haul and recycle or dispose of wastes.
- ✓ Designate specific areas or service bays for engine parts or radiator

- cleaning. Do not wash or rinse parts outdoors.
- ✓ Use self-contained sinks and tanks when working with solvents. Keep sinks and tanks covered when not in use.
 - ✓ Inspect degreasing solvent sinks regularly for leaks and make necessary repairs immediately.
 - ✓ Rinse and drain parts over the solvent sink or tank, so that solvents will not drip or spill onto the floor. Use drip boards or pans to catch excess solutions and divert them back to a sink or tank.
 - ✓ Collect and reuse parts cleaning solvents and water used in flushing and testing radiators. When reuse is no longer possible, these solutions may be hazardous wastes, and must be disposed of properly.
 - ✓ Never discharge cleaning solutions or wastewater from steam cleaning or engine/parts cleaning to a street, gutter or storm drain.
 - ✓ Consider switching to a water-based cleaning solution system.

Keeping a Clean Shop

Good housekeeping practices minimize liability, reduce costs, and make it easier to detect spills and potential problems.



- ✓ Sweep or vacuum shop floors frequently. Use mopping as an alternative to hosing down work areas.
- ✓ Do not pour mop water into the parking lot, street, gutter or storm drain.
- ✓ Remove unnecessary hoses to discourage washing down floors and outside paved areas.
- ✓ Promptly clean spills before contamination of soil or entering storm drains. Use absorbents such as Oil Dri, kitty litter, or mops.

Remove and properly dispose of saturated absorbents. Using degreasers or washing spills into the storm drain will accelerate pollution and result in a fine.

The Sanitary Sewer

It may be advisable to discharge washwater generated at your shop into the sanitary sewer, since it is prohibited to discharge it into the storm sewers. However, restrictions also apply to sanitary sewer discharges. Hazardous wastes may never be discharged into the sanitary sewer system. Businesses that discharge into the sanitary sewer system must comply with the Sanitary Sewer and Sewage Disposal Ordinance (Ord. 83-101) administered by the Columbus Water Works. Some discharges may require the installation of pretreatment devices. For additional information, contact Columbus Water Works at 706-649-3400.

The Basics

Nothing but clean water may be discharged into the storm sewer system. It is illegal as well as harmful to the environment to discharge wastes, wash water, or materials of any kind to the storm drains. This includes solid and liquid wastes associated with the draining of automotive fluids, car washing, degreasing, sanding, painting, leaking vehicles and parts cleaning.

Minimize the contact of rainfall and runoff with pollutant sources. Do this by maintaining a clean facility, keeping materials covered, and managing wastes responsibly.

For more information contact:
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