

Best Management Practices

When conducting washing activities, the following Best Management Practices should be used:

- When washing, minimize the amount of water used.
- Do not use cleaning products if water will do the job, or minimize the amount of cleaning products used.
- Be aware of the weather forecast to allow adequate time for collection of wash water and cleanup of the area prior to rain.
- Maintain and regularly inspect containment measures to prevent bypasses of wash water out of the containment area.
- There are several methods and products that can be used to contain and collect wash water, including sand bags, berms, mat systems, and vacuums/pumps. It is the responsibility of the generator to determine the proper containment and collection method.

Regulatory Background

Under the federal Clean Water Act, Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permits are issued to cities nationwide requiring them to reduce stormwater pollution and prohibit non-stormwater discharges. To protect water quality and comply with MS4 permit requirements, City Code Sec. 96-27 prohibits the discharge of wash water to the stormwater drainage system and water bodies. Other cities nationwide have similar requirements in place for wash water disposal.



To report wash water discharges to the stormwater drainage system or water bodies, or to report other water pollution issues, call the Citizen Resource Center at (417) 864-1010.

For questions, contact:

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Water Quality Division
(417) 864-1996
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www.springfieldmo.gov/stormwater

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Wash Water Disposal

- Mobile Wash Businesses
- Power Washing
- Fleet Washing
- Other Commercial Cleaning Activities



Compliance is Good Business

What's the Issue?

Power washing and other washing activities conducted outside can result in wash water discharging to the stormwater drainage system, which flows directly into streams and lakes. Discharge of wash water to the stormwater drainage system is prohibited because it contains pollutants from the cleaners used and/or from the surfaces being cleaned. Even cleaners labeled "biodegradable" and "non-toxic" may be harmful to aquatic life. After cleaning various surfaces (e.g. dumpster areas, parking lots, equipment, structures), the wash water can contain dirt, oil, grease, chemicals, and other pollutants that are harmful to water quality in our streams and lakes.

To protect water quality for fishing, swimming, and drinking, City Code Sec. 96-27 prohibits wash water and other non-stormwater discharges that contain polluting substances from discharging into the stormwater drainage system or into streams or other water bodies. This applies to anyone generating wash water including mobile power washing businesses, facilities doing their own washing, or homeowners. The exception is wash water from individual residential or charity car washing.

When done correctly, power washing can help protect water quality by cleaning outdoor surfaces and properly disposing of the wash water.



Stormwater drainage system

Discharging wash water into the stormwater drainage system or into streams or other water bodies is prohibited. The stormwater drainage system includes streets, storm drains, pipes, ditches, and drainage channels.

Containment and Disposal Options

Proper containment and disposal of wash water depends on the nature of the pollutants in it. It is the responsibility of the generator to determine the proper containment, collection and disposal method for a specific washing activity. This determination should be made prior to starting any job. Many power washing jobs will require containing and collecting the wash water to prevent it from discharging to the stormwater drainage system or water bodies.

Sanitary Sewer Disposal

Disposal of wash water to a sanitary sewer in Springfield may be done on-site with the property owner's permission or at the power washer's facility. Disposal should be done through a private sewer connection only, such as a sink, toilet, floor drain or lateral cleanout. If washing is being done to remove paint or other chemicals, prior approval for disposal to a sanitary sewer must be obtained from the City's Clean Water Services Division at (417) 864-1490. Wash water may also be hauled to Springfield's wastewater treatment plant by a permitted wastewater hauler if prior approval has been obtained. Disposal of any kind to a sanitary sewer manhole is strictly prohibited unless prior approval has been obtained. Please note that stormwater (i.e. falling precipitation), groundwater, surface water, roof drains, and outside drains connected to the sanitary sewer are strictly prohibited.

Evaporation

Wash water that contains visible debris or residue, soap, detergent or other cleaning agents, or excessive amounts of any pollutant may not be left on paved surfaces to evaporate because the

residue will discharge to the stormwater drainage system in subsequent rain events.

Disposal to Vegetated Area

Wash water can drain to a vegetated area on-site where the washing is occurring with the property owner's permission as long as it will not discharge to the stormwater drainage system or to a water body, does not contain excessive amounts of pollutants that may contaminate groundwater and soil, and will not create a nuisance condition. This option is generally only appropriate for routine washing activities to remove light accumulation of dirt and mildew using water only or small amounts of cleaners appropriate for disposal to land. This option is prohibited for engine washing, paint removal or other types of washing operations that are likely to generate significant concentrations of pollutants, involve the use of cleaners not appropriate for land disposal, or large-scale operations that will generate large quantities of water that are likely to saturate the vegetated area and cause impacts to groundwater and soil. Draining to a vegetated area may require a permit from the Missouri Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). Contact MDNR to inquire whether a permit is needed at (417) 891-4300.

Permit Options

If there is a need to discharge wash water to the stormwater drainage system or to a water body from one specific location, it may be possible to obtain a site-specific permit from MDNR to do so. MDNR does not issue wash water discharge permits to discharge to the stormwater drainage system or to a water body from multiple locations, so that is not an option for mobile washing businesses. A permit is not needed if all the wash water is collected and disposed of to the sanitary sewer or hauled to a permitted wastewater treatment plant. Disposal to a vegetated area may require a permit.