A-58: Pressure Washing, Steam Cleaning, and Similar Activities

Stormwater runoff (rainwater and snow melt) is the largest source of pollution to our lakes, streams and Puget Sound. King County requires businesses to implement measures to protect our shared waters. If the requirements below do not prevent pollution, additional measures are necessary.

For additional information and requirements for:

- interior washing operations, refer to BMP activity sheet A-14: Interior Washing Operations (Including Mobile Contractors);
- washing the exterior of buildings and other large surfaces, refer to BMP activity sheet A-15: Washing of Buildings, Rooftops, and Other Large Surfaces;
- washing of docks, wharves, piers, floats, and boat ramps, refer to BMP activity sheet A-30: In and Over Surface Water Activities; and
- washing of parking lots, driveways, or other areas where automotive fluid (e.g., oil, gasoline) are present, refer to BMP activity sheet A-31: Parking Lots, Driveways, and Outside Storage Areas.

Required BMPs - Polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB)

- Prior to washing buildings and structures, an assessment for PCB-containing building materials is required if:
    - the buildings or structures were constructed or renovated between 1950 and 1980, and;
        - the onsite stormwater drainage system discharges to a surface water—such as a lake or stream, or
        - the onsite stormwater drainage system discharges to a municipally owned stormwater drainage system.
    - Refer to the Washington State Department of Ecology's *How to Find and Address PCBs in Building Materials* for additional information.
    - Single-family homes are exempt from PCB assessment.
- The discharge of wash water to a municipal stormwater drainage system or surface water is prohibited if the building or structure is suspected of or confirmed to have PCB-containing materials. The wash water must be collected and discharged to the sanitary sewer or hauled offsite for disposal at a wastewater treatment plant.
- Contact the local jurisdiction's stormwater program to inform them when PCB-containing materials are, or are likely to be, present. King County Stormwater Services can be reached at (206)477-4811.

Required BMPs

- Oily, soapy, or otherwise dirty water is not allowed to discharge to any stormwater drainage system or surface water.

- The use of “environmentally friendly”, "nontoxic" or “biodegradable” soaps and detergents does NOT make it acceptable to discharge to any stormwater drain system or surface waters. All soaps are harmful to aquatic organisms.
- Discharge tool and equipment wash water to the sanitary sewer (with approval from the sewer authority) or a holding tank for proper offsite disposal. The discharge of wash water to the stormwater drain system is not allowed without treatment and an Individual Wastewater Discharge permit from the Washington State Department of Ecology.

Required BMPs for Exterior Washing Services

- Oil stains must be removed with absorbent materials prior to washing
- Wash water is not allowed to flow off-site.
- If soaps, detergents, or any other chemicals are used, use a sump pump, wet vacuum or similar device that enables collection of wash water and associated solids so they can be disposed of properly. The wash water must not go to the stormwater drainage system, groundwater, or surface water. This may require temporarily blocking or disconnecting downspouts from the stormwater drainage system in order to prevent illicit discharges.
- Wash water runoff does not have to be collected if:
    - PCB-containing materials are not present. An assessment is required if the building or structure was constructed or renovated between 1950 and 1980;
    - The area to be washed is not a parking lot, storage yard or other area where automotive fluids (e.g., oil, gasoline) are present;
    - No soaps, detergents, or any other chemical (including pesticides) are used;
    - Only cold water is used. Heated water cannot be discharged to the stormwater drainage system; and
        - the wash water can be diverted to a nearby vegetated area to infiltrate into the ground; or
        - the wash water is filtered through media (e.g., filter fabric) to trap solid materials, prior to entering a stormwater drainage system. The area must be swept prior to washing, in order to remove all fines (e.g., silts and clay) that may otherwise clog or bypass the filtering process.
- If the surface being washed has lead or other heavy metal-bearing paint or dust (such as chromium or cadmium), you must use a commercial washing service that will collect, test, and properly dispose of the wash water.
- Block or disconnect all rooftop downspouts when washing roofs. The wash water must be directed to pervious areas such as landscaping or gravel for infiltration, collected and disposed of to the sanitary sewer, or taken off-site for proper disposal.
- Wash water may not be discharged to underground injection control (UIC) wells. For additional information, refer to BMP activity sheet A-57: Underground Injection Control (UIC).

- If the area is in a designated critical aquifer recharge area (CARA), infiltration may not be allowed. For additional information on critical aquifer recharge areas in King County, refer to King County Code 21A.24.311-316.

Supplemental BMPs

- Recycle your wash water with an enclosed loop system or use self-contained parts washers. Numerous products are commercially available that recycle and contain wash water and cleaning solvents.

Additional Information

- Potential pollutants can include: hydrocarbons—such as gasoline and diesel, metals, nutrients, oil and grease, oxygen demanding substances, PCBs, pH, sediment, and other pollutants.
- *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Manual*, Chapter 3: Commercial and Multifamily BMPs
    - A-11: Cleaning or Washing of Tools and Equipment
    - A-12: Cleaning or Washing of Food Service Areas and Equipment
    - A-13: Vehicle Washing and Steam Cleaning
    - A-14: Interior Washing Operations (including Mobile Contractors)
    - A-15: Washing of Buildings, Rooftops, and Other Large Surfaces
    - A-30: In and Over Surface Water Activities
    - A-51: Mobile Businesses and Vendors
    - A-54: Washing of Light Rail Vehicles and Elevated Guideways
- *Stormwater Pollution Prevention Manual*, Chapter 5: Information Sheets
    - Catch Basin Insert
    - Disposal
- Contact the local sewer authority and the King County Wastewater Treatment Division Industrial Waste Section at 206-477-5371 for more information on disposal to the sanitary sewer system.
- Washington State Department of Ecology, *How to Find and Address PCBs in Building Materials*, https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/2204024.pdf