

City of Pomona

Storm Water Compliance For Auto Repair and Maintenance

What an 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 into surrounding water bodies, is prohibited by both local ordinances and state and federal laws.

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

The City of Pomona, and the surrounding cities, are required by the State of California to conduct regular storm water pollution compliance inspections at auto repair shops and other businesses. The suggestions in this letter can help a business prepare for inspection.

The Basics

Storm water regulations include two basic requirements:

- Nothing but clean water may be discharged to the storm drain. 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 from draining automotive fluids, car washing, degreasing, sanding, painting, leaking vehicles, and parts cleaning.
- Minimize the contact of rain fall and runoff with pollutant sources. Do this by maintaining a clean facility, keeping materials covered, and managing waste responsibly.

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 non-porous 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 pads to prevent spills from spreading.

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- Transfer fluids drained from vehicles to a designated waste storage areas as soon as possible. Drain pans and other open containers or fluids should not be left unattended.
- Store wastes or bulk fluids within secondary containment to prevent leaks or spills from reaching the storm drain system or sewer.
- 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 properly.
- Eliminate discharges from these operations to the storm drain 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 to a street, gutter, or storm drain.
- Consider switching to a water-based cleaning solution system. Case studies have proven that these systems are equally effective, less toxic, and save money. Call the Department of Toxic Substance Control at (916) 255-3545 for more details.

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Keeping a Clean Shop

- Good housekeeping practices minimize liability, reduce costs, and make it easier to detect spills and potential problems.
- Sweep or vacuum the shop floor 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.
- Regularly sweep parking lots and areas around your facility instead of washing them down with water. Hosing dirt, oil, grease, and other pollutants into the storm drainage system is prohibited and may result in a fine.
- Collect all metal fillings, dust, and paint chips from grinding, shaving, and sanding, and dispose of the waste properly. Never discharge these wastes to the storm drain or sanitary sewer.
- Clean up all spills immediately and properly dispose of the generated wastes.

The Sanitary Sewer

It may be advisable to discharge wash water generated at your shop into the sanitary sewer, since it is prohibited to discharge it into the storm drainage system. However, restrictions also apply to sanitary sewer discharges. Hazardous wastes may **never** be discharged to the sanitary sewer. Businesses that discharge to the sanitary sewer must comply with the Sewer Disposal Ordinance of the City of Pomona and Sanitation Districts of Los Angeles County Industrial Waste Policy, and must report the nature of their discharges to the sanitary sewer authority. Some discharges may require installation and maintenance of pretreatment devices. Call City of Pomona Public Works Department for more information at (909) 620-2251 or contact LACSD (621) 908-4288 or visit www.lacsd.org.

Storage

- Appropriate storage protects your shop from hazardous spills.
- Store hazardous materials and waste indoors or where they are protected from rain, with secondary containment that prevents spills or leaks from reaching the sanitary sewer or storm drain.
- Keep fully stocked spill kits readily available.
- Keep dumpster lids closed and keep lids on waste barrels and containers. Store containers and dumpsters under cover to reduce exposure to rain.

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- All hazardous wastes must be labeled according to hazardous waste regulations.
- Never mix waste oil with fuel, antifreeze, or chlorinated solvents. Keep wastes separate to increase your waste recycling/disposal options and to reduce your costs. Consult your hazardous waste hauler for details.
- Keep storage areas clean and dry. Conduct regular inspections so that leaks and spills are detected as soon as possible.
- Carefully transfer fluids from drip pans and collection devices to designated waste storage areas, as soon as possible.
- When receiving vehicles to be parted or scavenged, park them on a paved surface and immediately drain and collect gasoline and other fluids properly.
- Drain all fluids from components, such as engine blocks, which you may store for reuse or reclamation. Keep these components under cover and on a drip pan or sealed floor.
- Store batteries securely to avoid breakage and acid spills. Shelving should be secured to the wall. Store used batteries indoors to avoid contact with rainwater. Keep them in a plastic tray to contain leaks. Recycle old batteries using a licensed recycling service.
- Minimize the distance between waste collection points and storage areas.
- Recycle solvents, paints, oil filters, antifreeze, motor oil, batteries, and lubricants.
- Keep accurate records of all recycling and disposal.

Hazardous Materials and Wastes

All hazardous materials and hazardous wastes must be stored, used, and disposed of according to federal, state, and local laws, including, but not limited to, fire codes, hazardous materials and waste laws, and zoning restrictions.

Education and Training

Your success in following these guidelines depends on an effective training program. Train all employees upon hiring and annually thereafter on storm water compliance, personal safety, chemical management, and proper methods for handling and disposing of hazardous waste. Ensure that all employees understand appropriate disposal methods for different types of waste.

Environmental Concerns, Call (909) 620-3628
Water Watcher 24-Hour Reporting Line, Call (909) 620-2244
To Report Illegal Storm Water Discharges, Call 1(888) CLEAN LA