

COLLECTING WASH WATER ON PRIVATE PROPERTY

A simple and acceptable method for collecting wash water on private property requires only a drain plug, small sump pump, and a length of hose. If a small parking-lot-type catch basin is available, remove the grate, plug the drain pipe (usually 2, 3, or 4 inches in diameter), and place the pump in the catch basin, attached to a garden hose. As wash water drains to this lowest spot, pump to landscaping, a sewer line cleanout, or a container for later disposal to the sewer.

DIRECTING WASH WATER TO THE LANDSCAPING

When routing wash water to landscaping, check the slope and area to be sure to avoid runoff into a street or gutter. If the soil is very dry, wet it down thoroughly before discharging so that wash water will soak into the soil instead of running off to the street, gutter or storm drain.



WHERE TO DISPOSE OF WASH WATER

Onto landscaping or unpaved surface

Option 1

- Discharge does not contain hazardous waste;
- Discharge will not cause flooding or nuisance problems, or flow to a creek; and
- You have the owner's permission.

Option 2

To the street or storm drain, if:

- You have *successfully* used dry cleanup methods described in the "tips" section to remove fresh oil stains, debris, and similar pollutants – before using water; and
- Cleaning is done with water only – no soap or other cleaning chemicals; and
- Water has not removed paint.

EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES

Special materials such as sheets of absorbent, storm drain plugs & seals, small sump pumps and vacuum booms are available from many vendors.

For a listing of equipment, supplies, and vendors please visit www.basmaa.org and view the "Pollution from Surface Cleaning Folder" under the "Training" tab.

Guidelines for Sidewalk & Plaza Cleaning and Wash Water Disposal Methods



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A clean and well-maintained community is an important component to a high quality of life. These guidelines are prepared to help business and property owners, the Novato Downtown Business Association, and others who are interested in cleaning their sidewalks.

Since cleaning of paved areas, including sidewalks and plazas has the potential to discharge polluted wash water and non-stormwater to the storm drains if not properly conducted, the following guidelines will help ensure that our creeks and waterways are not adversely impacted by these cleaning activities.

The City of Novato requires that cleaning of paved areas following a four-step approach:

1. Perform dry cleanup before washing down.
2. Wash without soap or chemicals when possible.
3. Keep polluted wash waters out of storm drains.
4. Dispose of wash waters properly.

DRY CLEANUP METHODS

In many cases you can eliminate the need to collect and/or divert wash water if you follow this two-step process.

1. Use absorbents (such as rags, absorbent mats or pads, rice hull ash, cat litter, vermiculite, or sand) to pick up greasy oil spills.
2. Sweep or vacuum to pick up litter, debris, or saturated absorbents.



Waste materials from dry cleanup, such as absorbents, paint chips, etc., often may be disposed of in the trash. Check with the local solid waste authority to be sure. Rags may be sent to an industrial laundry.



AVOID USING SOAP OR DETERGENTS

Even biodegradable soap is harmful to the environment. Using these products always requires the collection and proper disposal of wash water, and an encroachment permit may be required. Please contact Public Works at 899-8246.

SCREENING WASH WATER

When cleaning surfaces such as sidewalks, or plazas *without soap*, thorough dry cleanup should be sufficient to protect storm drains. However, if any debris could enter storm drains or remain in the gutter or street after cleaning, wash water should first pass through a “20 mesh” or finer screen to catch the material, which should be disposed of in the trash.

BLOCKING STORM DRAINS & COLLECTING WASH WATER

- Sand bags and plastic sheeting can be used to create a barrier around storm drains.
- Plugs or rubber mats can be used to seal storm drain opening.
- You can also use vacuum booms, containment pads, or temporary berms to keep wash water away from the street, gutter, or storm drain.

