

Outside Washing

Know the Law

The City of Tulsa has an ordinance regarding the activities associated with outside washing of property. This includes, but is not limited to, the cosmetic cleaning of streets, parking lots, sidewalks, building walls and roofs. Best management practices are provided as a guideline for outside washing.

Disposal of Anything Other than Stormwater into the Storm Sewer System is Unlawful in the City of Tulsa

- Wash water which does not carry pollutants into the storm sewer system is an exception.
- Proof such as analytical results of proposed/past discharges may be required to establish that the subject discharge(s) do/did not contain pollutants.
- Discharge onto the land surface is only permitted with the property owner's permission and only when the wastewater does not create a nuisance condition, flow into the storm drain system and/or contaminate soils with hazardous waste.

It is Unlawful to Discharge Stormwater into the Sanitary Sewer System

- The pollutants contained in wastewater discharged to the sanitary sewer may not exceed levels set forth by the City of Tulsa Ordinance Title 11-C, Chapter 12.
- Sanitary sewer discharges of certain washing processes may be subject to other federal or local regulations. Following these best management practices will help ensure that you and/or your company stay in compliance with the City of Tulsa Ordinance Title 11-A, Chapter 5 to protect area water quality and avoid enforcement action.

Before You Wash, Plan Ahead

- Pre-clean and remove all litter and dispose of properly.
- Remove all liquid pollutants (such as anti-freeze, oil, or gasoline) by using absorbent material or other means.
- Dispose of all waste into a dumpster, which is covered and does not leak.
- Try to minimize water use.



STORMWATER BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs)

Washing Options

You must choose one of the two following wash options. **Option 1 is preferred.**

Option 1 – Capture All Wash Waters

- This option must be used if chemicals and/or heated water will be used at any time during the cleaning process.
- During cleaning, capture all wash waters for disposal by using vacuum pumps, booms/berms, portable containment areas, weighted storm-drain covers, inflatable plumber's plugs, oil/water separators, holding tanks, portable sump pumps, hoses, and/or absorbents.
- Wash waters may be disposed into the sanitary sewer at the location the wash waters are generated or off site in an environmentally acceptable manner. At no time can the wash waters be discharged into the storm sewer system.
- Remove and then dispose of any grit or sludge material in the trash. DO NOT dispose of this material into the sanitary sewer, as it is unlawful per City of Tulsa Title 11-C chapter 12.
- Use only chemicals that will not result in a violation of Title 11-C chapter 12, or choose less toxic cleaning products.

Option 2 – Do Not Capture Wash Waters

- If you choose this option, chemicals and/or heated water cannot be used at any time during the cleaning process.
- Employ Best Management Practices (BMPs), such as chemical or hydrocarbon absorbents, filters, screens, or any practice that will remove pollutants from the wash waters.
- Wash waters must filter through the absorbents before entering the storm sewer. When washing pavement, place the appropriate BMPs (hydrocarbon absorbents pads, filters, screens or booms) at the point where the water leaves the wash area or property or at the storm sewer inlet (if possible). This will remove pollutants, which otherwise would have been discharged to the storm sewer. This could be at the storm sewer drop boxes, inlets, parking lot entrances/exits, etc.
- Keep BMPs in place until you finish all washing activities and all wash waters have been processed.

After Washing

Throw used absorbent material and sediment into a trash container, which is covered and does not leak.

Common Violations Include:

- a) Using chemicals and/or heated water during the cleaning process, but failing to collect and properly dispose of the wash waters (wastewater). This includes allowing the wash waters to sit and evaporate.
- b) Failing to use BMPs during the implementation of Option 2 because the wash water (wastewater) appeared "clean".



STORMWATER BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPS)

- All discharges to a City of Tulsa sewer system, must comply with the applicable requirements set forth in the City of Tulsa's code of revised ordinances. The specific ordinances pertaining to discharges to the storm and sanitary sewers are listed in the following table:

Sewer System	Ordinance	Internet Address
Storm	Title 11-A, Chapter 5	http://www.cityoftulsa.org/our-city/city-charter--ordinances.aspx
Sanitary	Title 11-C, Chapter 12	http://www.cityoftulsa.org/our-city/city-charter--ordinances.aspx

- Contact the Stormwater and Land Management section at (918) 591-4325 if you believe (or are unsure if) your discharge will be subject to these additional regulations.

Please be advised that federal law requires the City of Tulsa to stringently enforce both of these sewer usage ordinances. Persons violating either ordinance may be subject to enforcement actions.

BMPs are an important tool in helping the City of Tulsa remain a vibrant and healthy place to live and work. They also help the city maintain compliance with its Stormwater Quality Permit.



Streets & Stormwater Department
4502 S. Galveston Ave., Tulsa, OK 74107
(918) 591-4325 | www.cityoftulsa.org/sos

