

Stormwater Best Management Practices for

FIRE DEPARTMENTS & DISTRICTS

STORMWATER PROTECTION

These Best Management Practices (BMPs) apply when municipal or county firefighters use water to fight a fire, respond to emergency spills or during daily activities at any municipal fire station. The wastewater from fire fighting can contain a variety of contaminants including sediments. Chemicals from car and/or engine fires or spills of hazardous substances can also contaminate stormwater. If the wastewater enters storm drains or ditches, contaminants can eventually reach surface waters. Although wastewater from firefighting activities is allowed to discharge to the storm drainage system, emergency services should attempt to protect storm drains whenever possible.

The objective in stormwater protection is that **only rainwater and snow melt go down the storm drain**. Best Management Practices (BMPs) are specific steps taken to prevent stormwater pollution as a result of day-to-day activities. All employees shall review this information sheet as a training tool, and make every effort to keep pollutants from going down the storm drain by putting the following BMPs into practice.

In case of a hazardous material release, please contact the Boulder County Environmental Emergency Response Team (EERT) by calling 303-441-3851 and entering pager number 5800, or have Dispatch page EERT.

ACTIVITY	BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES
General	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Do not store or dispose of any liquids or other materials outside. Materials that are no longer contained in a pipe, tank, or other container are considered to be “threatened discharges” to stormwater unless they are actively being cleaned up. Threatened discharges as well as direct flows of pollutants are illegal. Be familiar with the locations of storm drains and spill kits around and within your facility.
Fire Fighting & Emergency Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If hazardous materials are suspected, contact the Boulder County Environmental Emergency Response Team (EERT) or auxiliary fire personnel to block storm drain inlets, drainage ditches or creeks and to assure cleanup. Contact EERT by calling 303-441-3851 and entering pager number 5800, or have Dispatch page EERT. If the wastewater is suspected of being hazardous, take samples for testing to determine proper disposal methods. Never flush materials into storm drains! Even dirt and sediment are considered pollutants. Be aware of storm drains during fire training activities. Protect storm drains when possible.
Extinguishers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> During fire extinguisher training, spray extinguishers only in areas where the foam can be collected. Sweep up any spilled foam and dispose of properly.
Fire Suppression/ Sprinkler System Inspection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If possible, discharge water systems (lines and valves) to the sanitary sewer or to landscaping, <u>not</u> to parking lots or storm drains. When performing a “main drain” or “pump test” direct water flow to landscaping if possible. Discharge from dry chemical suppression systems must be disposed of properly.
Vehicle Washing & Repair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wash vehicles only a specifically designated wash area that drains to the sanitary sewer or take vehicles to a commercial or city-operated car wash. Never wash vehicles in the parking lot or driveway. Perform maintenance or repair work <i>inside only</i>. Only emergency repairs and maintenance activities that do not involve fluids may be performed outdoors. Do not store leaking vehicles or equipment outdoors. Contain the leak (drip pans), repair immediately, or move indoors and repair.
Good Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep all outdoor work areas neat and tidy. Sweep around work areas after each shift and properly dispose of all wastes. Do not hose down any outdoor work areas or waste container storage areas at Department/District facilities except where wash water will <u>only</u> enter the sanitary sewer.

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Fueling	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post signage prohibiting “topping off” and describing spill response procedures. • Keep a spill response kit at or near each fueling area. • Require that the person doing the fueling or liquid transfer remain present during entire fueling operation. (“Don’t walk away!”) • When fueling equipment in the field, use a funnel or containers with spouts to prevent spills. • During bulk liquid (i.e. oil, gas or fertilizer) transfer, cover or berm around all down-gradient storm drain inlets within 25 feet. Keep all drain valves in liquid bulk containers and secondary containments locked in the closed position.
Illicit Discharge Hotline 303- 441- 4444	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay alert for any signs of illicit discharges or connections (anything except rain water that is allowed to flow into any storm drain inlet or drainage ditch) including dry weather flows, pipes or hoses emptying into storm drains, and “threatened discharges”. (<i>See below for “Allowable Discharges”.</i>) • Report any suspicious discharges to your supervisor or Storm Water Coordinator for your municipality.
Spill Clean-up and Prevention	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop a formal “Spill Response Plan” and post near spill clean up materials. • Ensure that adequate spill kits are located near all work areas where materials are used, stored, loaded, off-loaded or transferred or on emergency response vehicles. • Clean up any spills or leaks quickly and thoroughly. Use only “Dry Clean-up Methods”. <u>Never</u> hose down a spill! • If a spill threatens escape the facility boundaries, enter a storm drain or any surface water, place absorbents, earth, or other impervious material to block its’ entry and call the State Spill Notification Hotline at (877-518-5608) and Boulder County Dispatch (303-441-4444) immediately.
Waste Management & Disposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All waste receptacles must be sturdy, leak-tight, and equipped with lids or covers. Keep all outdoor waste receptacles closed unless adding or removing material. • Place waste receptacles indoors or under a roof whenever possible, and in compliance with fire codes. • Do not wash out waste receptacles outdoors unless wastewater will be discharged to a sanitary sewer. • Never place liquids or liquid containing wastes in an outdoor waste receptacle.

Allowable Non-Storm Water Discharges include the following only: (*Note: This list may vary per municipality and may require a State of Colorado MINDI Permit.*)

- Discharges approved by the authorized enforcement agency as being necessary to protect public health and safety, such as flows from firefighting, and dye testing, provided the person undertaking such testing provides verbal notification to the authorized enforcement agency 24 hours prior to the time of the test.
- Water line or hydrant flushing or other potable water sources (*May require a State Permit*)
- Landscape irrigation or lawn watering irrigation return flows
- Uncontaminated ground water infiltration to storm drains (as defined by 40 CFR 35.2005(20))
- Diverted stream flows
 - Rising groundwater
- Uncontaminated pumped ground water
 - Crawl space pumps
- Foundation or footing drains
 - Air conditioning condensation
- Individual residential car washing or car washing of less than two (2) consecutive days in duration for charity or nonprofit.
- Natural springs, riparian habitat or wet-land flows
- Swimming pools (if de-chlorinated or less than 0.05 PPM chlorine)
- Any other water source not containing pollutants

Contact us at: www.basin.org/WASH (303) 441-1439 or www.pacepartners.com (303) 441-1180

