

Tips on proper cleaning and disposal methods

Avoid cleaning chemicals!

Even biodegradable soap is harmful to the environment.

Dry cleanup methods

You can eliminate the need to collect and/or divert wash water.

Use absorbents (rags, absorbent mats, pads, or booms; oil-absorb; cat litter; or sand) to pick up greasy, oily, or hydrocarbon spills. Sweep or vacuum to pick up litter, debris, or saturated absorbents.

Dispose of waste materials from dry cleanup such as absorbents, paint chips, etc., in the trash. Check with local solid waste authorities to be sure.

Wet cleanup methods

With cleaning chemicals

When using cleaning chemicals you must collect this wash water and discharge to landscaping or sewer.

Without cleaning chemicals

When cleaning surfaces such as buildings and decks without loose paint, or sidewalks and plazas without cleaning chemicals (with water only), thorough dry cleanup should be sufficient to protect storm drains. If any debris could enter storm drains or remain in gutters or streets after cleaning, wash water should first pass through a silt fence or similar filter fabric.

Hazardous waste disposal

Be sure to read cleaning product labels before disposing of wash water. Follow use and disposal instructions carefully. Check with Rutherford County to find out how small businesses can dispose of hazardous waste at a drop-off event (instead of hiring a hazardous waste hauler). http://rutherfordcountyttn.gov/environmental/hhw_1113.pdf

Collecting wash water

A simple method for collecting wash water on private property requires only a drain plug, a 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 4, 6, or 12 inches in diameter), and place the pump in the catch basin attached to a garden hose. As wash water drains to the lowest spot, pump it to landscaping, a sewer line cleanout, or a container for later disposal to the sewer. Vacuum booms are another option for capturing and collecting wash water.

Directing wash water to landscaping

When routing wash water to landscaping, check the slope and area to avoid runoff into a street or gutter.

Blocking storm drains or containing wash water

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

Equipment and supplies

Materials such as absorbent sheets, storm drain plugs and seals, small sump pumps, and vacuum booms are available online, at a local erosion control supplier, or at a building supply company.

City of Murfreesboro
Water and Sewer Department

300 NW Broad Street

Murfreesboro, TN 37133

Pollution from Surface Cleaning

Flat work • Sidewalks
Plazas • Building Exteriors
Gas Stations • Drive-throughs
Parking Areas



Pollution from Surface Cleaning

Why are you receiving this flyer?

If you are a business owner, facility manager, or professional mobile cleaner, or may hire a mobile cleaner for your site, this pamphlet provides guidance on how to prevent pollution in our local streams. The City of Murfreesboro Stormwater Program needs your assistance in keeping our streams clean.

It harms the environment.

In Murfreesboro, storm drains are pathways for pollution traveling directly from streets, gutters, and other paved surfaces to local creeks and into the Stones River. Wash water from surface cleaning often carries pollutants that can harm wildlife species that depend on healthy streams and rivers for their survival.

It's against the law!

Allowing pollutants into storm drains is prohibited under federal and state law and Murfreesboro ordinance. Both the person who discharges the pollutant or leaves it behind and the owner of the property where the material is generated are liable.

This handout provides guidance for mobile cleaners to prevent water pollution while cleaning flat surfaces such as sidewalks, plazas, building exteriors, parking lots, drive-throughs, gas stations, and dumpster pads.

This guidance is not specifically intended for other mobile cleaning jobs such as fleet washing and detailing, carpet cleaning, or cleaning of food-related

equipment, though the same principles regarding preventing pollution apply.

Where do these pollutants come from?

Three phases of the cleaning process can cause problems for the environment:

- **using** harmful cleaning chemicals including soaps, bleach, and solvents
- **removing** toxic materials such as oil, antifreeze, and grease from parking lots, sidewalks, or other surfaces
- **generating** polluted wash water from activities such as pressure washing buildings, parking lots, and gas stations

What sorts of pollutants or waste can surface cleaning generate?

Pollutants include the following:

- sediment and grit
- soaps, cleaning chemicals, and solvents
- wash water containing paint chips or lead paint chips
- hydrocarbon runoff
- oil-saturated absorbents (typically resulting from cleaning)

Where Should Wash Water Go?

Landscaping or unpaved surfaces

Wash water from cleaning unpainted building exteriors, sidewalks, or plazas can go onto landscaping or unpaved surfaces if

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



Down a sink, toilet, or cleanout through the sewer to a wastewater treatment plant

Wash water from surface cleaning of painted building exteriors, dumpster pads, sidewalks, plazas, parking areas, gas stations, drive-throughs, food service grease containment areas, etc., is permitted to go down a sink, toilet, or sewer cleanout if

- you have used dry cleanup methods before washing with or without cleaning chemicals;
- gravel, pebbles, dense grit, paint chips, or debris are screened out before being placed into the sink, toilet, or cleanout;
- the discharge does not contain hazardous waste; and
- you or the property owner have checked the local wastewater treatment plant's requirements before discharge to the sewer.



Contact the Murfreesboro Water and Sewer Department at 848-3200 for information about wash water discharge requirements.

To the street or storm drain

Wash water from cleaning sidewalks, plazas, and building exteriors can be discharged to the storm drain if

- you have successfully used dry cleanup methods (described in the *Tips* section of this folder to remove fresh oil stains, debris, and similar pollutants before using water);
- cleaning is done with water only—no cleaning chemicals; and
- water has no paint or grit particles.



MIDDLE TENNESSEE
STATE UNIVERSITY

MTSU Stormwater Program
Environmental Health and Safety
www.mtsu.edu/stormwater • 615-494-8708

MURFREESBORO
STORMWATER
PROGRAM
improving the quality of local streams

City of Murfreesboro
Water and Sewer Department
www.murfreesborotn.gov/ • 615-848-3200

Cleaning and Disposal

Type of Surface	Cleaning Method	Proper Disposal
Sidewalks, plazas	Dry cleanup first Wash without cleaning chemicals	Screen wash water, if needed, to catch debris THEN Discharge to landscaping or to a gutter, street, or storm drain
Sidewalks, plazas	Block the storm drain or contain the runoff Dry cleanup, then wash with cleaning chemicals	Discharge to landscaping OR Collect water and pump to the sewer
Parking areas, driveways, gas stations, and drive-throughs	Block the storm drain or contain runoff Use absorbents to pick up oil then dry sweep Clean with or without cleaning chemicals	Collect water and pump to sewer
Restaurant/food handling dumpster pad areas; grease storage	Block the storm drain or contain runoff	If you must use water after sweeping/using absorbents, collect water and pump to the sewer
Building surfaces, decks, etc. without loose paint	Dry cleanup Use high-pressure water with no cleaning chemicals	Screen wash water, if needed, to catch debris THEN Discharge to landscaping or gutter, street, or storm drain
Unpainted building surfaces, wood, decks, etc.	Block the storm drain or contain runoff Use cleaning chemicals or acid wash to remove deposits, wood restorer, or other chemicals	Make sure the pH is between 6 and 10 THEN Discharge to landscaping OR Collect wash water in a tank and pump to the sewer
Painted surfaces being cleaned to remove paint or graffiti	Block the storm drain or contain runoff Use any cleaning method	Collect wash water in a tank and pump to the sewer or dispose of properly if it is a hazardous waste