

## RESPONSIBILITIES FOR STORMWATER

# Tips for Graffiti Removal

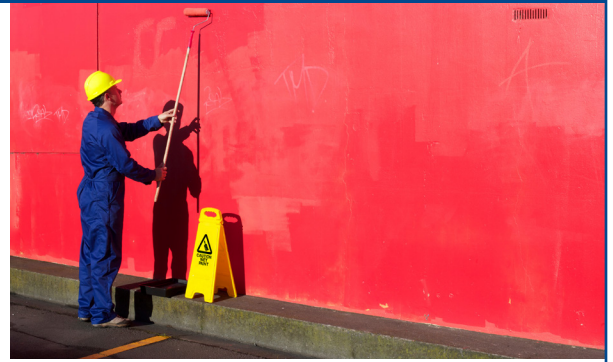
Commercial and industrial businesses are responsible for any activities on their property that lead to non-stormwater discharges to the street, gutter, or storm drain. The Clean Water Program's friendly and knowledgeable staff support businesses like yours in preventing water pollution and complying with stormwater regulations. The fact that you are reading this factsheet means you have already decided to take steps to do the right thing when maintaining your property. Thank you for keeping our water safe and healthy.

### General Practices

- Graffiti is removed by painting over, pressure washing, and sand blasting. Schedule removal activities during dry weather.
- Cover the storm drains (e.g., with tarp, drain mat, or other control measures) prior to removing graffiti from walls, signs, sidewalks, or other structures. This prevents spills of solvents, paint waste, wash water, or material drift from entering storm drains.
- Call the local wastewater agency before discharging wash water to the sanitary sewer to determine if the solvent cleaners, if being used, are acceptable for discharge.
- Consider using a waterless and non-toxic chemical cleaning method for graffiti removal (e.g., gels or spray compounds).
- Remove storm drain covers when job is complete.

### BMPs for Painting Over Graffiti

- Test and inspect equipment for leaks prior to starting to paint. Tighten all hoses and connections. Do not overfill paint container.
- Transport paint in containers with secure lids.
- Cover nearby storm drain inlets prior to painting.
- Do not mix, transfer, or load paint near storm drain inlets.
- Never clean brushes or rinse paint containers into a street, gutter, storm drain, or creek.
- Collect waste from cleaning paint equipment or brushes and put into a bucket or drum with a secure lid for transport back to your facility to be reused, recycled, or disposed of properly.



**Keep wash waters and debris OUT of the storm drains. Keep paints and hazardous cleaning chemicals OUT of storm drains and sanitary sewers.**



Draining wash water from cleaning activities into the street or storm drains damages sensitive habitats and can kill wildlife. Water flowing into storm drains travels directly to local creeks and then to **San Francisco Bay**. It does not go to a wastewater treatment plant.

Learn more about preventing water pollution and the Clean Water Program at [www.cleanwaterprogram.org](http://www.cleanwaterprogram.org).



Protecting Alameda County  
Creeks, Wetlands & the Bay  
[cleanwaterprogram.org](http://cleanwaterprogram.org)

- Dispose of unused paint at an appropriate household hazardous waste disposal facility. Visit your local City website to find locations near you.

### BMPs for Pressure Washing Graffiti

- If water must be used, use berms or other protective barriers to isolate polluted areas from storm drain inlets.
- Cover storm drains to prevent potential discharge. Collect and dispose of water properly.
- Do not allow water used for cleaning to enter storm drains or waterways.
- If a graffiti abatement method generates wash water containing a cleaning compound (i.e., high pressure washing with a cleaning compound), call the local wastewater agency before discharging wash water to the sanitary sewer.
- Collect and dispose of non-hazardous wash waters in sanitary sewer cleanout by vacuuming/pumping.
- Cleaning solutions that cannot be recycled may need to be disposed of as hazardous waste.

### BMPs for Sand Blasting

- Cover nearby storm drain inlets prior to starting work. Tarps and similar control measures should be used to prevent spills or material drift from being deposited into storm water drainage system or watercourses.
- Use a sander with a vacuum filter bag.
- Collect solid waste by vacuuming or sweeping and secure in an appropriate container for transport to be recycled or disposed of properly.
- Clean up afterwards by sweeping or vacuuming thoroughly, and/or by using absorbent. Properly dispose of the absorbent.
- Collect wash water in a tank and pump to the sanitary sewer (after filtering), or dispose as hazardous waste, as directed by the local wastewater agency.

### KEY DEFINITIONS

The **Storm Drain System** was built to collect and transport rain to prevent flooding in urban areas. Anything that flows or is discharged into the storm drain system goes directly into local creeks or San Francisco Bay without any treatment.

The **Sanitary Sewer System** collects and transports sanitary wastes from interior building plumbing systems to the wastewater treatment plant where the wastewater is treated.

### Local Stormwater Agencies

For advice on avoiding disposal to the storm drain system, contact:

Alameda.....	(510) 747-7930
Albany.....	(510) 528-5770
Berkeley.....	(510) 981-6400
Dublin.....	(925) 833-6630
Emeryville.....	(510) 596-3728
Fremont.....	(510) 494-4570
Hayward.....	(510) 881-7900
Livermore.....	(925) 960-8100
Newark.....	(510) 578-4286
Oakland.....	(510) 238-6600
Piedmont.....	(510) 420-3050
Pleasanton.....	(925) 931-5500
San Leandro.....	(510) 577-3401
Unincorp. Alameda County ...	(510) 567-6700
Union City.....	(510) 675-5308

### For More Help

For advice and approval on wastewater disposal to the sanitary sewer system, contact:

#### Cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland or Piedmont

East Bay Municipal  
Utility District (EBMUD)..... (510) 287-1651

#### Castro Valley

Castro Valley Sanitary District.. (510) 537-0757

#### City of Dublin

Dublin-San Ramon  
Services District..... (925) 828-0515

#### Cities of Fremont, Newark or Union City

Union Sanitary District..... (510) 477-7500

#### City of Hayward

City of Hayward..... (510) 881-7900

#### City of Livermore

City of Livermore..... (925) 960-8100

#### City of Pleasanton

City of Pleasanton..... (925) 931-5500

#### Cities of San Lorenzo, unincorporated portions of San Leandro and Hayward

Oro Loma Sanitary District..... (510) 481-6971

#### City of San Leandro

City of San Leandro..... (510) 577-3401



#### CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

Simple changes to your operations and maintenance can help you comply with local regulations. The Clean Water Program makes it easy.

[cleanwaterprogram.org](http://cleanwaterprogram.org)