

# PAINTING WITHOUT POLLUTION

## Best Management Practices and Pollution Prevention

The Capital Regional District (CRD) Environmental Services department has developed environmental programs and regulations to reduce the amount of pollutants in storm drains and sanitary sewers. Painting and paint removal can cause pollution in a number of ways. This information sheet outlines best management practices that prevent pollution and protect water quality and our environment.

## What are Best Management Practices?

Best management practices are proactive techniques that reduce pollution at the source before they end up in our environment. They are practical, based on common sense and can be implemented easily.

Some examples of techniques are:

- buy only what you need
- choose the least toxic materials
- reuse leftover paints and solvents

## Why Should Painting Operations Use Best Management Practices?

As the operator of a painting business you play a vital role in protecting public health and the environment. All paints, solvents and adhesives contain chemicals that are harmful to aquatic life in creeks, lakes and the ocean. They may be unsafe for sewage workers and damage treatment plant equipment. Sanding waste and pressure washing runoff may contain lead and other heavy metals. Toxic chemicals can also originate from spillage, cleaning residues and rags. These chemicals can destroy sensitive ecosystems and pollute recreational sites and our water supplies.

By implementing best management practices, you will:

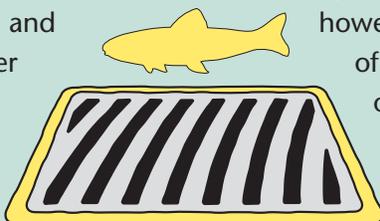
- protect and improve water quality
- save money by reducing, reusing and recycling
- be better able to comply with existing regulations
- reduce potential liabilities and avoid penalties
- offer environmentally friendly services to your customers

## Storm Drains vs. Sanitary Sewers

Storm drains and sanitary sewers are separate systems with different functions:

**Storm drains** are typically found in streets and parking lots to collect stormwater. Stormwater is surface water that includes water from rain, snowmelt and irrigation. The water runs across rooftops, lawns, pavement and other surfaces into storm drains or seeps directly into the ground. Along its journey the water picks up contaminants like litter, oil and antifreeze leaks from cars, pesticides used on lawns, and spilled paints or solvents. Stormwater ends up untreated in our lakes, streams and the ocean.

**Sanitary sewers** collect wastewater from indoor plumbing such as toilets, sinks, washing machines and floor drains. They are called "sanitary" because they keep sewage contained in underground pipes. The sewage flows to a screening facility or treatment plant before it is discharged into the ocean. Sewage consists mainly of water and organic matter; however, it can also contain a variety of chemicals, oil, grease and other materials that are flushed down the drain.



## Painting Preparation

### Planning

- Plan ahead. Calculate the amount of paint required for the job. Buy only what you need. This will save you money and you won't have to deal with leftovers.
- Use water-based paints whenever possible. Look for the words "latex" or "clean up with water" on the label.
- Determine whether your wastes will be hazardous or not. Non-hazardous wastes can go into the regular garbage. Hazardous wastes have to be disposed of by a registered hazardous waste company (see Waste Disposal).

### Quick tips

- Check where storm and sewer drains are located.
- Determine how you will deal with your waste before you start the job.
- Stock up on absorbent materials and other clean-up items.

### Preparation

- Prepare exterior painting surfaces without generating wastewater, for example, by sandblasting or wet scraping.
- Use sandpaper, a heat gun, and good old-fashioned elbow grease for paint stripping.
- Use citrus-based paint removers whenever possible. They are less toxic than chemical strippers, which are considered hazardous waste.
- If you are stripping or cleaning building exteriors with high pressure water, install a curb, dyke or berm around the activity area to prevent stormwater run-off. Direct the wash water onto a landscaped area. Avoid working in windy conditions.



## Painting and Clean-up

### Painting

- Prevent over-spraying of paints and excessive sandblasting.
- Use drip pans and drop cloths in mixing and painting areas.
- Store latex paint rollers and brushes in a tightly wrapped plastic bag in the freezer and reuse them on the next coat of the same colour.
- Have absorbent materials readily available for paint spills.

### Quick tips

- Keep all liquid paint products and wastes away from storm drains and sanitary sewers.
- Never pour excess paint on the ground or down storm or sewer drains.
- Use appropriate clean-up procedures for water-based and oil-based paints.

### Clean-up

- Paint out brushes as much as you can. Squeeze paint from brushes and rollers back into the container before cleaning them.
- Pour excess paint from trays and buckets back into the paint can. Wipe containers clean with a cloth or paper towel. Dispose of dried wipes in the garbage.
- Rinse water-based paint brushes in the sink after pre-cleaning. Never pour excess paint or wastewater from clean-up of latex paint in the storm drain.
- Clean oil-based brushes with paint thinner. Never clean oil-based brushes in a sink or over a storm drain. Filter the solvent and reuse if possible (see Reuse).

## Waste Management

### Reduce

- Buy only what you need.
- Avoid acidic, caustic and hazardous substances.

#### Quick tips

- Reduce use of hazardous materials and replace them with non-toxic alternatives.
- Reuse leftover paints whenever possible.
- Recycle unwanted paints at a local recycling depot.

### Reuse

- Reuse leftover paint or give it to someone else who can use it.
- Reuse solvent. Pour the solvent into a glass or metal container and allow the solids to separate out. Skim off any paint residue, wrap it in paper and dispose of it in the garbage. Save cleaned solvent for your next project. Consider using different containers for the initial and final cleaning.

### Recycle

- Recycle unwanted paint and empty paint cans at local recycling depots.
- Return products in their original, labeled containers with lids securely fastened.
- Do not mix paint with any other product to ensure it can be recycled.

### Waste Disposal

- Hazardous wastes **must** be disposed of at a hazardous waste collection facility. Hazardous wastes include: paint removal abrasives and chemical paint stripping residue; lead-based paint dust, chips and wastewater; and liquid residues from paints, thinners, solvents, glues and cleaning fluids.
- Non-hazardous waste can be disposed of in the regular garbage. Non-hazardous wastes include: dry sweep paint chips and dust from non-hazardous dry stripping and sandblasting; and used brushes, rags and drop cloths that have been thoroughly dried. Contact the CRD Hotline at 360-3030 or email [hotline@crd.bc.ca](mailto:hotline@crd.bc.ca) for more information on disposal options.
- Keep records of all disposal or recycling.

## Storage, Spill Prevention and Response

### Storage

- Keep paint and solvent containers closed when not in use. Protect them from exposure to rainfall.
- Keep paint and paint-related products contained. Monitor the storage containers or containment areas on a regular basis. A sheen or discolouration of any pooled wastewater indicates potential contamination.

### Spill Prevention

- Develop a spill response plan. Take into account the layout of the site and the maximum volume of paints and solvents.
- Educate employees by implementing a hazardous materials training program.
- Stock up on spill clean-up supplies. Replenish as needed.

#### Quick tips

- Identify waste storage areas.
- Train employees in spill prevention and response.
- Report spills to the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP).

### Spill Response

- Whenever possible, use dry methods to clean up spills, such as sweeping, vacuuming, mopping or using absorbents.
- Manage spilled hazardous materials such as cleaning solvents as hazardous waste (see Waste Disposal).
- Report spill incidents immediately to the Provincial Emergency Program (PEP) at 1-800-663-3456.





## Painting Without Pollution Checklist

### Yes, I have

- identified the location of the nearest storm and sewer drains
- posted these best management practices in a central location
- organized regular staff training sessions
- checked the condition and proper labeling of all chemicals and cleaning compounds
- provided containment and spill clean-up equipment in storage areas and vehicles
- prepared and posted a spill response plan
- kept records of hazardous waste disposal

### What is a spill?

A spill is defined as a discharge into the environment that is abnormal in quantity or quality, considering all circumstances.

### For More Information

#### CRD Hotline

(250) 360-3030

[hotline@crd.bc.ca](mailto:hotline@crd.bc.ca)

To find out about waste management

#### CRD Web site

[www.crd.bc.ca/es](http://www.crd.bc.ca/es)

To find out about CRD Environmental Services programs and regulations

#### Integrated Stormwater, Harbours and Watersheds Program

(250) 360-3256

[stormwater@crd.bc.ca](mailto:stormwater@crd.bc.ca)

#### Regional Source Control Program

(250) 360-3256

[RSCP@crd.bc.ca](mailto:RSCP@crd.bc.ca)

#### Product Care

1-800-667-4321

[www.productcare.org](http://www.productcare.org)

To recycle leftover paints and solvents

#### Provincial Emergency Program (PEP)

1-800-663-3456

To report hazardous waste spills

This info sheet was developed in partnership with



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