

Only Rain Down the Drain

Storm drains are designed to carry only rainwater. They flow directly to creeks and rivers and into Monterey Bay without any type of treatment. When painting materials, paving and construction materials, and household wastes enter storm drains, they pollute waterways and are toxic to aquatic life. These tips will help you reduce pollution from your home activities and protect our environment.

Pollution Prevention Tips

Small changes can make a

BIG
difference.



Pollution Prevention Tips

Taking Care of Your Home and the Environment

**Painting,
General Home
Maintenance,
and Construction**



Taking Care of Your Home and the Environment

Painting

- Oil-based paints, paint thinners, and cleaning solvents must be disposed of as hazardous wastes. These wastes are accepted free of charge by your Household Hazardous Waste Facility (see below). Consider using latex or water-based paints as an easier alternative.
- If using latex paints, the brush or roller may be rinsed in the sink.
- If using oil-based paints, the brush or roller must be cleaned in a bucket. All cleaning fluids and rinses, such as paint thinner or water, must be collected in the bucket and disposed of as a hazardous waste.
- Never rinse paint brushes or paint containers in the street or storm drain.
- Pour leftover paint from the roller pan back into the paint can. Spray the paint in spray guns and hoses back into the paint can.
- Before cleaning brushes and rollers, brush excess paint onto newspaper or cardboard.
- Reuse paint thinners by filtering or letting the paint residue settle out. Dispose of thinners as household hazardous waste. Never pour them on the ground or into storm drains.
- Used paint can be recycled at the County's Household Hazardous Waste Facility. Please call **831-454-2606** for recycling and disposal information.

General Home Maintenance

Some common household wastes, such as motor oil, antifreeze, oil-based paints, pesticides, and herbicides are hazardous wastes! They must be disposed of properly—they cannot be poured down the sink, toilet, on the ground, or into the storm drain.

- Do not plumb the drain from your dishwasher or washing machine to outside areas because soaps and detergents are pollutants.
- Dispose of soapy water, such as water from window or carpet cleaning, into the sink or toilet. If you hire a cleaning service, ask where they discharge the wastewater. Be sure that they do not discharge it into a storm drain.
- Keep garbage can lids secure and recyclable items in bins. Loose trash is often blown into the street, clogging gutters and polluting our waterways.
- Sweep walkways and driveways instead of hosing them off. If you must use water to clean them, sweep first and don't use any soap or cleansers.
- Pick up pet waste and dispose in the garbage.

Concrete, Masonry and Asphalt

- Paving and construction materials, if allowed to reach the street via wind or rain, clog gutters, storm drains, and creeks.
- Use a tarp under mixers or on areas used for mixing.
- Be sure to cover and store open cement and plaster bags, loose materials, and debris so that wind or rain will not carry them into the street or storm drain.
- Dispose of small amounts of excess dry concrete, grout, and mortar in the trash.
- Collect and reuse excess gravel and sand, or give them away to a neighbor.
- Rinse off mixers, tools, and other equipment in a dirt area where the water can soak into the ground and won't go into the street or storm drain.
- Be sure that any contractors you hire abide by municipal codes and these pollution prevention tips.
- Sweep, instead of hosing down, when cleaning up.

**Pollution prevention
can be easy. Small
changes in the way you
do things around the
house and in your yard
make a big difference.**

For more information call:

City of Santa Cruz
Environmental Compliance
831-420-6050

City of Watsonville
Utilities Customer Service
831-768-3133

County of Santa Cruz
Sanitation Operations
831-477-3907

