

# Preventing Pollution: It's Up to Us

In the Santa Clara Valley, storm drains transport water directly to local creeks and San Francisco Bay without treatment. Stormwater pollution is a serious problem for wildlife dependent on our waterways and for the people who live near polluted streams or baylands. Some common sources of this pollution include spilled oil, fuel, and fluids from vehicles and heavy equipment; construction debris; sediment created by erosion; landscaping runoff containing pesticides or weed killers; and materials such as used motor oil, antifreeze, and paint products that people pour or spill into a street or storm drain.

Thirteen valley municipalities have joined together with Santa Clara County and the Santa Clara Valley Water District to educate local residents and businesses to prevent stormwater pollution. Join us by following the practices described in this pamphlet.

## Doing the Job Right

### **General Business Practices**

- Protect stockpiles and landscaping materials from wind and rain by storing them under tarps all year-round.
- Stack bagged materials on pallets and under cover.
- Store pesticides, fertilizers, and other chemicals indoors or in a shed or storage cabinet.
- Schedule grading and excavation projects during dry weather.
- Use temporary check dams or ditches to divert runoff away from storm drains.
- Protect storm drains with sandbags or other sediment controls.
- Provide erosion control for areas of exposed soil using vegetation or blankets.

### **Storm Drain Pollution from Landscaping and Gardening**

Many landscaping activities expose soils and increase the likelihood that earth and garden chemicals will run off into the storm drains during irrigation or when it rains. These chemicals are toxic to aquatic life.

### **Landscaping/Garden Maintenance**

- Use pesticides sparingly, and only as a last resort, according to instructions on the label. Rinse empty containers, and use rinsewater as product. Dispose of rinsed, empty containers in the trash.
- Dispose of unused pesticides as hazardous waste.
- Discontinue application of any erodible landscape material at least 2 days before a forecast rain event or during wet weather.
- Collect lawn and garden clippings, pruning waste, and tree trimmings. Chip if necessary, and compost.
- Do not blow or rake leaves, etc. into the street, or place yard waste in gutters or on dirt shoulders, unless you are piling them for recycling (allowed by San José and unincorporated County only). Sweep up any leaves, litter or residue in gutters or on street.
- In San José, Recycle Plus customers can leave yard waste for curbside recycling pickup in piles (no larger than 5 feet by 5 feet) in the street, 1 foot from the curb and completely out of the flow line to any storm drain.
- In communities with curbside pick-up of yard waste, place clippings and pruning waste at the curb in approved bags or containers. Or, take to a landfill that composts yard waste. No curbside pickup of yard waste is available for commercial properties.



### **Integrated Pest Management**

Integrated Pest Management (IPM) offers effective techniques and less-toxic products for controlling common pests. IPM is a method of controlling pests and weeds using the least toxic methods available through a combination of mechanical, biological and chemical controls.

- For a list of less-toxic pest control products go to [http://www.mywatershedwatch.org/images/2011\\_Less-Toxic\\_Products\\_by\\_pest\\_list.pdf](http://www.mywatershedwatch.org/images/2011_Less-Toxic_Products_by_pest_list.pdf)
- Hire or become an IPM certified pest control company. For more information visit My Watershed Watch website at <http://mywatershedwatch.org/hiringIPMcompany.html>.
- Consider designing a sustainable garden. For more information visit the Bay Area Eco Gardens website (<http://www.bayareaecogardens.org/>).

## Small Business Hazardous Waste Disposal Program

Businesses that generate less than 27 gallons or 220 pounds of hazardous waste per month are eligible to use Santa Clara County's Conditionally Exempt Small Quantity Generator Disposal Program. Call (800) 207-8222 for a quote, more information or guidance on disposal.

Palo Alto operates a similar program, with monthly collection, for small businesses. Call the City of Palo Alto, (650) 496-6980, or Clean Harbors, 1-800-433-5060 for information or to schedule an appointment.

This brochure is one in a series of pamphlets describing storm drain pollution prevention measures for specific types of construction industry activities. Other pamphlets include:

### ***General Construction and Site Supervision***

### ***Painting and Application of Solvents and Adhesives***

### ***Fresh Concrete and Mortar Application***

### ***Roadwork and Paving***

### ***Earth-Moving and Heavy Equipment Operation***

### ***Dewatering Activities***

### ***Home Repair and Remodeling***

For additional brochures, call **1-800-794-2482**.



**Santa Clara Valley  
Urban Runoff  
Pollution Prevention Program**

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## Spill Response Agencies:

1. In the City of Santa Clara, call (408) 615-3080.
2. In the City of Palo Alto, call (650) 329-2413.
3. In the City of San José, Dial 9-1-1 if hazardous materials enter the storm drain system. For non-hazardous spills, call (408) 945-3000.
4. In other cities, find the contact number at [www.scvurppp-w2k.com/report\\_spill.shtml](http://www.scvurppp-w2k.com/report_spill.shtml) or **DIAL 9-1-1**
5. State Office of Emergency Services Warning Center (24 hours). . . . . **1-800-852-7550**
6. Santa Clara County's Illegal Dumping/ Discharge Hotline. . . . . (408) 918-3400

## Local Pollution Control Agencies

County of Santa Clara Integrated Waste Management Program. . . . . (408) 282-3180

County of Santa Clara District Attorney Environmental Crimes Hotline. . . . (408) 299-TIPS

Santa Clara County Recycling Hotline. . . . . 1-800-533-8414

Santa Clara Valley Water District. . . . . (408) 265-2600

Santa Clara Valley Water District Pollution Hotline. . . . . 1-888-510-5151

San José-Santa Clara Regional Wastewater Facility. . . . . (408) 635-6600  
*Serving Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Milpitas, Monte Sereno, San Jose, Santa Clara, Saratoga*

Sunnyvale Water Pollution Control Plant *Serving Sunnyvale.* . . . . (408) 730-7270

Regional Water Quality Control Plant. . . . . (650) 329-2598  
*Serving East Palo Alto Sanitary District, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Stanford*

Regional Water Quality Control Board San Francisco Bay Region. . . . . (510) 622-2300

# Landscaping and Gardening

## *Best Management Practices (BMPs) for the Construction Industry*



## Who should use this brochure?

- Landscapers
- Gardeners
- General contractors
- Home builders
- Developers
- Homeowners