

DRY CLEANERS BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMP): Behaviors and practices used by individuals to prevent or reduce stormwater pollution impacts.

WHAT IS STORMWATER POLLUTION?

When rain falls and snow melts, the runoff produced picks up a variety of contaminants such as oil, metals, salts, pet waste, fertilizer, and grass clippings as it flows over roofs, roadways, sidewalks, and lawns. Stormwater runoff ultimately flows into storm drains.

Remember: storm drains lead directly to our local rivers and streams.

HOW DO DRY CLEANERS CONTRIBUTE TO STORMWATER POLLUTION?

- Incorrect storage of used and new cleaning chemicals can spill and be washed down the storm drain.
- Improper discharge of wastewater into storm drains.



CHEMICAL SPILLS: Never hose oil or other chemical spills down the drain. Use a spill kit to quickly clean spills and put waste into the trash.

EDUCATE STAFF: Teach staff proper handling, storage and disposal of supplies, how to use a spill kit, and where storm drains are located on the property.

DRY MOP METHOD: Use a dry mop to soak up spills or cover in sawdust or kitty litter and sweep.

CHEMICAL DISPOSAL: Practice proper disposal of chemicals via certified receptacles.

AIR POLLUTION: Perchloroethylene is a known toxic air pollutant. When it rains water particles collect bits of air pollutant and pull it into the water system. Allow drying cycle to complete to reduce fumes.

CONTROL LITTER: Be sure workspace and surrounding areas such as parking lots are free of litter, debris and scraps that could end up in storm drains.



MAINTAIN EQUIPMENT

- Check hoses, couplings, pumps, valves and gaskets frequently for leaks. Use a halogenated leak detector (~\$250) to help identify leaks.
- Repair leaks promptly.
- Update technology to wet cleaning, liquid carbon dioxide and silicone-based cleaning machines.
- Allow drying cycle to complete before opening the door. “Short cycling” reduces the effectiveness of solvent recovery equipment and increases fugitive emissions of solvents from the machine.
- Replace cartridge filters with spin disk filters that can be cleaned without opening.
- Cover containers of solvents to reduce solvent loss from evaporation and fugitive emissions of toxic air pollutants and VOC. This reduces worker exposure and releases of these pollutants to the outside air.
- Prevent spills by dispensing materials with spigots and pumps.

An on-site distillation unit may recover as much as 90% of solvents used. This reduces solvent purchases and disposal costs. — U.S. EPA



MODIFY PROCESSES

- Reduce process vent emissions by using a closed loop dry-to-dry machine with a refrigerated condenser. The addition of a carbon adsorber can further reduce emissions by recovering solvents.
- Load the machine properly. Overloading reduces the effectiveness of solvent recovery equipment. Underloading makes less efficient use of the solvent.
- Recover solvents from filter cartridges by draining the filters for 24 hours in the filter housing to capture additional solvent before disposal.
- Install spill containment structures under and around your dry-cleaning machine.
- Evaluate investment in a closed-loop dry-to-dry machine or other innovative cleaning technologies. Compare initial costs with savings, over time, in lower raw material and hazardous disposal costs.

A list of these small business assistance programs can be found at [epa.gov/smallbusiness](https://www.epa.gov/smallbusiness).

