

# Storm Drains vs. Sanitary Sewers

**Storm drains and sanitary sewers have two distinct functions. It's important to understand the difference.**

**Storm drains** collect and transport runoff from rainfall. Typically they are the drains found in streets and in parking lots.

**Pollutants are not removed** from storm-water before it is discharged into streams and rivers. Everything that goes down storm drains ultimately flows to the Sacramento River, Deepwater Ship Channel or the Yolo By-Pass and eventually to the ocean.

**Sanitary sewers** collect wastewater from indoor plumbing including toilets, showers, sinks, washing machines and floor drains. Wastewater flows to community sewer systems or individual septic systems for treatment. For more information call Sacramento Regional County Sanitation District at (916) 876-6064.

**Need info about solid waste disposal or hazardous waste?**

**Refuse and Recycling**  
**(916) 617-4590 or**  
[www.cityofwestsacramento.org](http://www.cityofwestsacramento.org)

City of West Sacramento, Environmental Services  
1110 West Capitol Avenue  
West Sacramento, CA 95615  
(916) 617-4850 [www.cityofwestsacramento.org](http://www.cityofwestsacramento.org)



*You are the solution ... to eliminating storm water pollution*

City of West Sacramento



Landscapers  
Guide to  
Storm Water  
Pollution  
Prevention

## What You Can Do To Help Prevent Storm Water Pollution...

### Concrete

Before starting a job, determine the proper disposal methods for liquid and solid materials (concrete, grout, stucco, mortar).

- Don't dispose of liquid waste in the trash.
- Haul large amounts of solid waste to the landfill.
- Put small amounts of excess dry concrete, grout, mortar and stucco in the trash.
- Wash out equipment in a heavy plastic lined contained area or into a leak-proof container so that wash water can evaporate.
- Keep sediment out of the storm drain by placing barriers to capture runoff from exposed aggregate, saw cutting, coring or mortaring.
- Set up a wash area for equipment. Let water evaporate in a leak-proof area, then throw away the dried sediment.
- Sweep sediment out of gutters and off of surrounding concrete and dispose of it in the trash.
- Make sure contractors follow correct disposal procedures.



## Water Quality Management for Professional Landscapers

### What you should know...

Water is a precious commodity, as we have learned during the drought years. As our towns grow, there will be an ever-increasing need to protect our water resources from pollutants. Each of us can share in that responsibility by taking simple measures to ensure that our daily activities help to protect our water resources.



It is easier and cheaper to prevent water pollution than to clean it up. The City of West Sacramento has adopted a Storm Water Management Program that includes public outreach and education of its residents and local businesses, so that everyone can contribute to keeping ALL of our water free of pollution. This fact sheet is designed to help meet those goals.

The practice of landscaping involves such activities as digging, trenching, irrigating, applying pesticides and fertilizers, mulching, and trimming of bushes and trees. These activities can generate soil, yard waste, and garden chemicals. Runoff from over-watering or rainfall carries these pollutants into the waterways where they impact water quality. Yard and garden chemicals can be harmful to beneficial insects and fish and contaminate ground and surface waters. Leaves, tree trimmings and grass clippings not only carry harmful chemicals into waterways, but can also clog storm drains, causing street flooding.

Properly managing these materials can prevent these pollutants from entering the storm drain system. Best Management Practices include proper handling, storage and disposal of landscaping materials. Some examples are listed here.

## Storm Water Best Management Practices:

- When using pesticides and fertilizers, take care to follow directions carefully and only use what is necessary to control the problem. Do not over-water to cause runoff of water contaminated with these chemicals.
- Do not dispose of leaves, grass clippings and tree trimming debris in the street. Pick up and dispose of appropriately, separate from other trash.
- Sweep driveways and walks instead of washing down with water.
- Prevent soil erosion by digging during dry weather and utilizing mulch, rock or fast growing plants to stabilize the soil quickly.
- Avoid creating large areas of concrete patio or other smooth surfaces. Consider pavers or other patio surfaces that encourage infiltration of water into the ground instead of running off into streets and gutters.
- Conserve water. Use drip irrigation, soaker hoses or micro-spray systems to prevent over-watering.
- Use organic or non-toxic fertilizers.
- Do not fertilize near the water line of streams or lakes.
- Store fertilizers, pesticides and other yard chemicals in a covered area to prevent accidental runoff.
- Find alternatives to conventional pesticides or use one specific to the type of pest you are trying to control.
- Read all labels carefully and follow directions exactly to avoid over application.
- Rinse empty containers and use rinse water as you would use the product, do not pour in gutters or storm inlets.
- Dispose of rinsed, empty containers in the trash.
- Educate your clients to use the same care in maintaining their yard as you do.