



Stormwater Management for Construction Site Contractors

If you operate a business that is involved in construction and excavation activities, we need your help and cooperation in our efforts to not further degrade and instead, improve the water quality of our rivers and creeks. The Walla Walla River and its tributaries such as Mill Creek are designated as water quality limited (degraded) by the State of Washington and some of our local creeks exceed water quality standards.

Chapter 13.15 of the City of Walla Walla Municipal Code prohibits the discharge of any material other than clean, uncontaminated stormwater into the city storm drain system and/or surface and ground waters such as Mill Creek or any of the many other creeks running through the city. Prohibited contaminants listed in the code include, but are not limited to, trash, debris, construction materials, silt, sediment, concrete, cement, gravel, gasoline, oil, grease, antifreeze and other petroleum products, detergents, paints, stains, and solvents.

The materials listed above are pollutants that degrade water quality and can be toxic to fish and other aquatic life. Our storm drains flow untreated into the many creeks throughout the city or into the ground where they can adversely affect groundwater. Storm drains do NOT empty into sewer pipelines that carry wastewater from our sinks and toilets to the Wastewater Treatment Plant. For this reason, nothing other than clean stormwater may be discharged into the street or alley, gutter, storm drains, drywells, and surface or ground waters.

Construction sites are potential sources of a wide variety of substances that are very harmful to fish and other aquatic life. Stormwater picks up fuel, oil, grease, antifreeze, and other fluids that leak from construction vehicles. In addition, they contribute sediment and heavy metals such as lead, zinc, copper and cadmium to stormwater runoff. Oil, fuel, and other petroleum products can suffocate fish and other aquatic organisms by coating their gills or other breathing surfaces, which prevents them from getting the oxygen they need to live. Heavy metals are toxic to aquatic life and are of particular concern because they have been shown to interfere with the ability of salmon and other migratory fish to find their way back upstream to their spawning streams. Sediment destroys spawning areas for steelhead, salmon and other fish by smothering eggs laid in the gravel. It also fills our storm drains requiring more frequent maintenance and settles out in our creeks which reduces their ability to carry water and potentially causes flooding and bank erosion.

The following are several sources of stormwater pollution from construction sites and what you need to do to help prevent and reduce it.

Dirt and other Sediment

- Dirt, sand, gravel, bark or other erodible material may not be stockpiled or stored in the street.
- Disturbed and exposed soils need to be protected from eroding into the street or onto adjacent property.
- Erosion control measures (i.e., silt fence, inlet protection, construction access) must be installed prior to first ground disturbing activity.
- Silt fence must be toe-in, not laid on surface with dirt piled up at base of fence.



- Disturbed soils must not be left exposed and unworked for more than ten days (July-September) and five days (October-June).
- Outdoor paved areas containing dirt or other sediment may be hosed off provided surfaces are swept first to remove as much dirt and debris as possible, detergents are not used, and water usage is minimized.

Protection of Stormwater Management Facilities

- All existing storm drain inlets in and adjacent to the construction site and all stormwater management facilities constructed such as catch basins, drywells, swales, and retention basins need to be protected to prevent dirt, gravel, or other sediment from getting into them until all disturbed soil areas are finally stabilized.
- Inlet protection devices must be installed correctly and properly maintained.
- Inlet protection devices must be cleaned or removed and replaced as specified by manufacturer.

Construction Site Access and Track-out

- Vehicle access to construction sites should be limited to only those vehicles that need direct access.
- All vehicle access points to construction sites must be stabilized to prevent track-out of sediment into the street.
- All vehicles must use stabilized construction access areas.
- Sediment tracked out into the street must be swept up at the end of each day.

Vehicle Maintenance

- All waste fluids from vehicle maintenance must be properly disposed of and may not be discharged in the street or storm drains.
- Any spills or leakage of gas, oil, or other vehicle fluid needs to be cleaned up and prevented from flowing or being washed to the street. Clean up all spills and leaks of fuel, oil, antifreeze or other fluids with absorbent cloths or other absorbent material such as cat litter and be sure to pick up and dispose of all used absorbent material properly in the garbage.
- Vehicles that are leaking oil or other fluids and are being stored outdoors need to have a drip pan placed underneath the vehicle to catch leaking fluids.

Waste Disposal

- All construction waste and debris must be disposed of properly.
- Trash containers or dumpsters located outdoors need to be covered to keep out rainfall.
- If liquid residue is placed in these containers, liquids need to be drained as much as possible.
- If liquid does leak out of trash containers or dumpsters, it needs to be contained and cleaned up using absorbent material. Contact the Solid Waste Division at 527-4591 to replace leaking cans and dumpsters.

Concrete Washout

- Concrete trucks, tools, and equipment must be washed out offsite, in formed areas awaiting installation of concrete or asphalt, or in designated lined washout areas.
- Unused concrete remaining in the truck or pump may not be dumped on bare ground and should be returned to the batch plant.



- Concrete wastewater including water from saw cutting and concrete aggregate surfacing may not be discharged or allowed to flow on bare ground, into the street, or into surface waters such as the many creeks that flow through the city.

Disposal of Unsuitable Excavated Material

- Unsuitable excavated material which needs to be disposed of offsite must be dewatered before it leaves the site to avoid leakage of muddy water from trucks into the street.

Dewatering of Excavation Areas

- Water from dewatering of excavation areas cannot be discharged directly to the street where it will flow to storm drains.

Construction Stormwater General Permit (CSWGP)

- A CSWGP is required by the Washington Department of Ecology for any construction project disturbing one acre or more, and all projects of any size that are part of a common plan of development or sale that is one acre or more, AND there is a potential for stormwater discharges to surface waters or storm drain systems that discharge to surface waters.
- For more information on the CSWGP, see Construction Stormwater General Permit Requirements on this webpage or go to <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/construction/index.html>.

Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated. Please be advised that violations of the above-referenced municipal code could result in fines, penalties, or other remedies as allowable by law.

Questions and/or Comments?

Contact the City of Walla Walla Stormwater Coordinator at 509.527.4537