



## Environmental Protection Advisory Bulletin

### **Carpet Cleaners, Janitorial Services and Pressure Washers**

*This advisory is to seek your assistance in the prevention of storm drain contamination.*

Carpet cleaners, janitorial and pressure wash services use a number of products and solutions to clean, sanitize or deodorize various components of buildings. Pressure washers and other mobile wash services clean various outdoor surfaces as well as vehicles, undercarriages, engines, etc..

Wastewater from carpet cleaning, janitorial, custodial, pressure washing and other cleaning operations contain sediments, chemicals, detergents, acids, caustics, oils, greases, heavy metals, excessive pH levels and other contaminants harmful to aquatic life, which must not enter the storm drainage system.

This is an important issue in Port Coquitlam as the storm drains (the roadside and parking lot drains) are separate from the sanitary sewer and discharge untreated into local creeks and streams. There are over 30 km of open creeks and streams in Port Coquitlam. These creeks form an important network of watercourses, which provide natural habitat for salmon, trout, and other aquatic life.

### **Best Management Practices**

To prevent contaminants from entering the storm drain system and ultimately our creeks and rivers please observe the following practices:

- Wash water must not enter the storm drain system.
- Wash water must be disposed of through an approved connection to the sanitary sewer system at the client's premises or be collected and trucked to an approved disposal facility. Contact the City of Port Coquitlam, Engineering Department for information on sanitary sewer connections, or contact the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection at 604-582-5200 for other disposal information.
- Where collection of wastewater from mobile pressure washing activities is impractical, it may be permissible to direct the wastewater away from storm drains to landscaped or gravel areas; however, you may be liable for any contamination or damage associated with this practice. Contact the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection for any requirements they may have.
- Old cleaning, sanitizing and deodorizing chemicals may require special disposal. Follow the manufacturer's directions for disposal of cleaning products. For further disposal information contact the manufacturer, the BC. Recycling Hotline at 604-732-9253 or the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection at 604-582-5200.
- Cleaning, sanitizing, deodorizing chemicals, solvents, acids and caustics must be stored in a secure area where spills will be contained and will not enter the drainage or the sanitary sewer systems.
- Ensure that all employees and your customers are aware of their important role in preventing storm drain contamination.

## Spills

Spills must be contained and cleaned up immediately to prevent the material from entering the drainage or sanitary sewer systems. Please follow the clean-up procedures as listed in the product's Material Safety Data Sheet.

Some chemicals may be flammable, toxic, corrosive, or have other hazardous properties. Call the **Fire Department** immediately at **911** or the Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection, **Provincial Emergency Program** at **1-800-663-3456**, if in doubt about any spill situation.

## Enforcement

Section 11 of the City of Port Coquitlam *Sewer Maintenance Bylaw*, 1971, No. 1091 states that:

11. No gasoline, napha, or other inflammable liquid or explosive substance, and no grease, oil, lye, free acid, mud, grit, plaster of paris, lime, clay or any other trade or industrial waste which may injure, or impair the efficiency or safety of the sanitary sewer system or storm drain system, through deposits forming in same or owing to the attacking and weakening of such sanitary sewer or storm drain, shall be discharged into any sanitary sewer system or storm drain system within the City.

In addition, The City of Port Coquitlam *Waterways Protection Bylaw*, 1969, No. 917 Section 2 states that:

2. Every person is prohibited from polluting any stream, creek, waterway, watercourse, waterworks, ditch, drain, or sewer, whether or not it is located on private property.

**Violators of the provisions of these bylaws shall be guilty of an offence punishable on summary conviction and shall be liable to a fine of at least \$200.00 and up to \$2,000.00 and imprisonment for up to six months. Also, violators will be held responsible for any associated clean up costs.**

Persons responsible for storm drain contamination could also be liable under the following environmental legislation:

- The Federal Fisheries Act
- The Provincial Waste Management Act
- The Provincial Fish Protection Act

**For further information contact:** Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection: Phone: 604-582-5200  
Port Coquitlam, Engineering Department: Phone: 604-927-5420

Other helpful information may be found in the Fraser River Action Plan, "*Chemical Use and Pollution Prevention Practices for Commercial Car and Truck Wash Facilities, Final Report*", Environment Canada, 1995

This bulletin is provided as a guide only. The information is compiled from various sources and is NOT warranted as to its accuracy and sufficiency by the City of Port Coquitlam. It is the responsibility of the business licence applicant to comply with all applicable bylaws and legislation.