

PROPER DISPOSAL OF WASTEWATER

Tips for Carpet Cleaners

The Clean Water Program's friendly and knowledgeable staff support companies like yours in preventing water pollution. The fact that you are reading this fact sheet probably means you have already decided to take steps to do the right thing with the wastewater from your business. Thank you for helping to keep our water safe and healthy.

Step 1: Filter

First, you should filter the wash water before discharging to the sewer. Fibers and other debris in the water can cause sewer blockages and overflows. The filtered material can go in the garbage, provided the carpet was not contaminated with hazardous materials. See page two for information on how to properly dispose of hazardous materials.

Step 2: Discharge properly

Next, it's important that wash water and rinse water from carpet cleaning be discharged into a **cleanout**, sink, toilet or other drain connected to the **sanitary sewer system**, and never into a street, gutter, parking lot or **storm drain**.

Allowing any material (liquid or solid) to be dumped into the storm drain, hosed off the pavement into a storm drain or placed where it can be carried to the storm drain by rainwater is an illegal discharge, and the individual could face civil and criminal prosecution for each violation.

KEY DEFINITIONS

The **Storm Drain System** was built to collect and transport rain to prevent flooding in urban areas. Anything that flows or is discharged into the storm drain system goes directly into local creeks or San Francisco Bay without any treatment.



Protecting Alameda County
Creeks, Wetlands & the Bay

cleanwaterprogram.org



**Keep carpet cleaning
wash water OUT of
storm drains.**



Pouring cleaning fluids or soapy wash water from carpet cleaning activities into the gutters or storm drains will damage sensitive habitats and kill wildlife. Water flowing into storm drains travels directly to local creeks and then to San Francisco Bay. It does not go to a water treatment plant first.

Learn more about preventing water pollution and the Clean Water Program at www.cleanwaterprogram.org.



Proper Procedures for Disposal

- Arrange with your customer to discharge into a toilet or utility sink on their premises, after receiving approval from the local wastewater treatment authority. OR
- Empty your spent cleaning fluid into a utility sink or other indoor sewer connection at your home base after receiving approval from your local wastewater treatment authority.

What about biodegradable and non-toxic cleaning products?

These guidelines apply even to cleaning products labeled “non-toxic” and “biodegradable.”

- “Non-toxic” means the product is not toxic to the human user.
- “Biodegradable” means the product will eventually break down. Biodegradable products can still harm aquatic wildlife since they need time to break down before they are safe. When biodegradable products enter a creek, they are generally still toxic and can harm wildlife and plants.

What if you’ve cleaned carpets contaminated with hazardous materials?

Hazardous materials, such as mercury and some solvents and spot removers, cannot be discharged to the sanitary sewer or disposed of as garbage. All hazardous waste must be properly managed and disposed.

For Help with Hazardous Waste Disposal

Alameda County Household & Small Business Hazardous Waste Program, www.acgov.org/aceh/household

California Department of Toxic Substances Control,
www.dtsc.ca.gov/managing-hazardous-waste

KEY DEFINITIONS

A **Cleanout** is a pipe fitting with a removable plug for inspecting and cleaning out sewer drain pipes.

The **Sanitary Sewer System** collects and transports sanitary wastes from interior building plumbing systems to the wastewater treatment plant where the wastewater is treated.



CLEAN WATER PROGRAM

Simple changes to your operations and maintenance can help you comply with local regulations. The Clean Water Program makes it easy.

cleanwaterprogram.org

For More Help

For advice and approval on wastewater disposal to the sanitary sewer system, contact:

Cities of Alameda, Albany, Berkeley, Emeryville, Oakland or Piedmont

East Bay Municipal

Utility District (EBMUD)..... (510) 287-1651

Castro Valley

Castro Valley Sanitary District .. (510) 537-0757

Cities of Dublin or Pleasanton

Dublin-San Ramon

Services District..... (925) 828-0515

Cities of Fremont, Newark or Union City

Union Sanitary District..... (510) 477-7500

City of Hayward

City of Hayward (510) 881-7900

City of Livermore

City of Livermore (925) 960-8100

Cities of San Lorenzo, unincorporated portions of San Leandro and Hayward

Oro Loma Sanitary District (510) 481-6971

City of San Leandro

City of San Leandro..... (510) 577-3401

Local Stormwater Agencies

For advice on avoiding disposal to the storm drain system, contact:

Alameda..... (510) 747-7930

Albany (510) 528-5770

Berkeley..... (510) 981-6400

Dublin (925) 833-6630

Emeryville (510) 596-3728

Fremont..... (510) 494-4570

Hayward (510) 881-7900

Livermore (925) 960-8100

Newark (510) 578-4286

Oakland (510) 238-6600

Piedmont..... (510) 420-3050

Pleasanton (925) 931-5500

San Leandro (510) 577-3401

Unincorporated Alameda

County..... (510) 567-5868

Union City..... (510) 675-5308

Local Hazardous Waste Agencies

Alameda County Environmental

Health (510) 567-6780

(Serves Alameda, Albany, Castro Valley, Dublin, Emeryville, Newark, Piedmont, San Lorenzo, and Sunol.)

Berkeley Toxics..... (510) 981-7460

Fremont Fire..... (510) 494-4213

Hayward Fire (510) 583-4910

Livermore-Pleasanton Fire (925) 454-2362

Oakland Fire (510) 238-3927

San Leandro (510) 577-3401

Union City..... (510) 675-5358