

Water Conservation Practices

One of the environmental objectives of Caltrans Maintenance is the minimization of pollutants leaving a Maintenance Facility. Sources of non-storm water that can contribute to off site flows include excess water from sprinklers, waste water from equipment and vehicle rinsing, and flows from over filling water tanks. Overuse of water might transport pollutants off site which ultimately degrades water quality.

This bulletin reviews the Water Conservation Practices Best Management Practices (BMPs) (per Section 2.14) that should be implemented to avoid causing erosion and/or transporting pollutants into a drainage system or watercourse.



Excessive water can pick up pollutants and flow off of the Facility into storm drains or waterbodies.

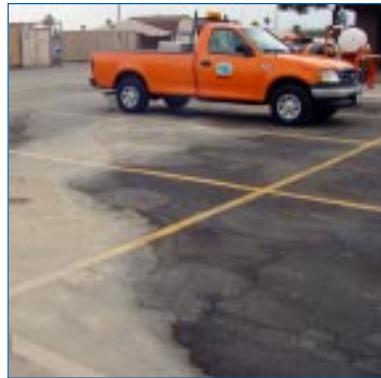
The Law...

All non-storm water discharges to storm water drainage systems and watercourses are prohibited, unless the discharge is authorized by a separate National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, exempted or conditionally exempt under the Caltrans Statewide Storm Water NPDES Permit.

What to Look for...

- Broken irrigation lines and/or sprinklers.
- Rust stains around metal, water pipes, or drain lines.

- Water stains on asphalt or concrete.
- Excessive water from ice machines.



Numerous spills, like overfilling a water tank or a sweeper, could pick up pollutants and degrade water quality.

What You Can Do...

- Ensure that equipment used for water applications are in proper working order to avoid overuse of water, leaks, or spills.
- Repair water leaks promptly. Protect downstream storm drainage systems and watercourses with applicable BMPs, such as sandbag or gravel bag barriers (per BMP Section 2.4.2 of the Storm Water Quality Practice Guidelines [SWQPG]), straw bale barriers (Section 2.4.3 of the SWQPG), or fiber rolls (Section 2.4.4 of the SWQPG).
- Manage irrigation systems to ensure the appropriate amount of water is used and runoff is minimized.
- Use dry cleanup methods where practicable so sediment or other pollutants do not discharge off of the Facility.
- Avoid rinsing or washing vehicles in undesignated areas. Rinse water should be contained, discharged to a sanitary sewer, or discharged to a landscaped area.
- Minimize the amount of water needed for each activity so water does not create runoff.



Using dry sweep methods minimize sediment or other pollutants from being washed off of the Facility

- Quickly contain any discharges that contain pollutants using applicable BMPs, such as spill prevention and control (per Section 2.10.1 of the SWQPG), hazardous waste management (Section 2.10.3 of the SWQPG), or contaminated soil management (Section 2.10.4 of the SWQPG).
- Where possible, water flushed from water lines should be directed to landscaped areas.
- Redirect dripping water from ice machines to landscaped areas, where applicable.
- Conduct weekly inspections and address issues.

Conditional Exemptions

The following non-storm water discharges are conditionally exempt provided that these discharges are not excessive, remain uncontaminated, and do not pick up other pollutants:

- Air conditioning condensate
- Landscape irrigation
- Lawn or garden watering
- Irrigation water
- Potable water sources
- Water from line and hydrant flushing
- Emergency fire fighting activities