

Stormwater Coalition of Albany County

A partnership to protect water quality

A number of communities and government agencies in Albany County have joined together to develop a stormwater management program to protect our waterways and enhance our quality of life. The goal of the Coalition is to utilize County-wide collaboration to identify existing resources and develop programs to reduce the negative impacts of stormwater pollution.

The Coalition, formed in 2008 via an intermunicipal agreement, meets monthly to develop and implement a stormwater management program which complies with New York State's Phase II Stormwater regulations.

Members

Albany County
City of Albany
Town of Bethlehem
City of Cohoes
Town of Colonie
Village of Colonie
Village of Green Island
Town of Guilderland
Village of Menands
Town of New Scotland
City of Watervliet
Village of Voorheesville
SUNY-Albany

Supporters

Capital District Regional Planning Commission
Albany County Soil and Water Conservation District

For information about the Coalition and how it is working to address the requirements of the Phase II Stormwater Rule, contact the Stormwater Coalition of Albany County.
E-mail address: swcoalition@albanycounty.com



Stormwater Coalition
of Albany County

Hospitals, Medical Treatment Centers & Healthcare Facilities...

How to Prevent Water & Storm Sewer Pollution

Best Management Practices for:

- Hospitals
- Satellite Medical Centers
- Blood Collection Labs
- Dentists & Dental Labs
- Clinical Laboratories
- Veterinarians



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Stormwater Pollution

What is Stormwater?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that does not soak into the ground. It flows from rooftops, over paved areas, bare soil, and sloped lawns. As it flows, stormwater runoff collects and transports soil, animal waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizers, oil and grease, debris and other potential pollutants.

What is the Problem?

Rain and snowmelt wash pollutants from streets, construction sites, and land into storm sewers and ditches. Eventually, the storm sewers and ditches empty the polluted stormwater directly into streams and rivers with no treatment. This is known as *stormwater pollution*.

Polluted stormwater degrades our lakes, rivers, wetlands and other waterways. Nutrients such as phosphorous and nitrogen can cause the overgrowth of algae resulting in oxygen depletion in waterways. Toxic substances from motor vehicles, and careless application of pesticides and fertilizers threaten water quality and can kill fish and other aquatic life. Bacteria from animal wastes and improper connections to storm sewer systems can make lakes and waterways unsafe for wading, swimming and fish consumption. Eroded soil is a pollutant as well. It clouds the waterway and interferes with the habitat of fish and plant life.

Fortunately, stormwater pollution can be prevented or minimized by implementing Stormwater Management Practices which are procedures or activities that reduce or eliminate pollutants in stormwater.



How to Prevent Pollution from Medical Waste

Medical and hospital waste, like household waste, is largely recyclable. Only 10-15% is regulated medical waste and less than 5% is hazardous waste.

Best Management Practices

Recommended Practices

- Whenever possible, use mercury-free medical products and cleaning agents, which don't contribute to increasing levels of mercury in streams and watersheds. Do not place mercury-containing products (thermometers) in medical waste containers. Products containing mercury should be collected in a single dedicated area and recycled or eliminated as hazardous waste.
- Sink and hopper traps should collect chemicals and other medical waste. They should be opened, cleaned and any combination of water and chemicals should be consolidated (depending on nature of compounds) and recycled.



Best Management Practices

Operational Practices

- Do not mix x-ray fixer with developer. Waste developer may normally be flushed down the drain; but if fixer and developer are mixed, the resulting solution cannot be flushed. Some x-ray film processing units automatically mix fixer and developer; the vendor can provide information on adapter kits that keep fixer separated from the developer.
- Support the development and use of environmentally safe materials, technology and products. Eliminate unnecessary "red bagging."
- Eliminate non-essential incineration of medical waste. Recycle mercury.
- Waste amalgam caught in plumbing traps must be shipped off to a permitted recycler. If amalgam must be sterilized before shipment to recycler, no method that utilizes heat should be used. The heat will cause the mercury to volatilize and be released to the environment.
- Phase out use of mercury, PVC plastics and persistent toxic chemicals in healthcare.