



Vehicle Maintenance & Repair Facility Reference Guide

The following reference material is to be used by the vehicle maintenance and repair facility operator as a guide to facilitate compliance under the current Davidson County, **Metro Water Services (MWS) environmental regulations**. However, in order to insure compliance within Metro Nashville/Davidson County, the facility operator must be aware of **all** pertinent Metro, State, and Federal regulations and not simply those contained within this document.

When operating a vehicle maintenance and repair facility, all individuals involved should be aware that many of the products associated with the routine operation of such facilities can be extremely harmful to the environment, especially if allowed to enter our streams and river systems. Pouring vehicle fluids such as gasoline, motor oil, and antifreeze directly into our streams is not only extremely harmful to the streams and the aquatic life within them, but it is also illegal. However, most people don't realize that poor housekeeping practices may also result in illegal discharges and can have equally detrimental affects on our streams. Fluid spills, uncovered/overflowing storage containers, leaking vehicles, performing outside/uncovered maintenance and repairs, storing exposed vehicles/vehicle parts in uncovered areas, and the washing of dirty/contaminated lots can also be substantial contributors.

To insure compliance under MWS environmental regulations, facility operators are encouraged to create and initiate an effective "good housekeeping" strategy which should be based on the understanding that **the storm drains and ditches around most facilities do not route water to the MWS sanitary waste treatment plant**. Instead, the storm drains and ditches within Davidson County are part of Metro's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4). This MS4 includes all storm drains, roads, ditches, culverts, or parking lots that are designed to route **clean/unpolluted stormwater**, safely into the streams of Metro Nashville/Davidson County. If good housekeeping practices are not utilized, many of the pollutants that are spilled or allowed to accumulate on site will be released and washed/discharged into the MS4 and streams during a rainstorm.

The NPDES division of Metro Water Services (MWS) has the specific task of monitoring all discharges into the MS4 for the purpose of maintaining the water quality of the streams within Metro Nashville/Davidson County. All pollutant discharges into the MS4 and streams are deemed "Illicit Discharges" and are illegal in Davidson County under Metro Code of Laws (Metro Code) §§ 15.64.205.

The following is a list of helpful facts and best management practices for the vehicle maintenance & repair facility operator to consider when creating and initiating an effective "good housekeeping" strategy:

- ❑ Just one quart of used oil can produce a slick 2 acres wide on the surface of a body of water and this same one quart of oil can ruin the taste of 1 million gallons of water.
- ❑ When exposed to the environment used oil will either seep into the soil (contaminating this soil and the groundwater for years to come) or be transferred to a stream via the MS4.
- ❑ It's important to clean up even small spills immediately and never let any contaminants accumulate on a lot where they will be exposed to rainfall. Use an approved absorbent or cat litter to absorb spilled fluids and then collect this material and dispose of in the trash.
- ❑ The only proper method of disposal for used motor oil, oil filters, and antifreeze is to recycle it at a used oil and antifreeze collection site. First, collect the oil or antifreeze in a clean container making sure not to spill any fluid on the pavement or soil, then bring the oil or antifreeze to your nearest [used oil and antifreeze collection location](#).
- ❑ Never wash or rinse the inside floors of a facility to an outside lot and never wash or rinse engines or other internal parts of vehicles onto an outside lot.

- Washing or pressure washing a dirty lot is **not** an acceptable practice for removing pollutants, **unless proper “contain and capture” practices are utilized.** Contain and capture involves the containment of the wash wastewater in a bermed or dyked area and the subsequent recapturing of this wastewater using a vacuum or pump. This wastewater can then be disposed of properly into a drain which routes to a MWS sanitary waste treatment plant.

Most internal drains including floor drains, sinks, and toilets route waste directly to the sanitary treatment plant. **The pouring of used motor oil and other vehicle fluids down such a drain may damage the treatment plant and is therefore, also an illegal activity.** All discharges into sanitary lines/drains that route to a treatment plant are monitored by the Industrial Compliance Section of MWS and are regulated under Metro Code of Laws (Metro Code) §§15.60 “Industrial Waste Discharges”. If you have questions on whether a material can or can’t be poured down an internal drain (drain that routes to a treatment plant), contact the MWS Industrial Compliance Office at (615) 862-4590.

Thank you very much for recognizing the importance of our streams as a valuable natural resource and your help in the protection and improvement of the streams within Metro Nashville/Davidson County.

This publication is a public service of:
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Metro Water Services is in the process of complying with all appropriate Americans with Disabilities Act Guidelines. For additional information contact Joseph A. Estes, Sr., 1600 2nd Avenue North, Nashville, TN 37208-2206; telephone 615-862-4862.