



***Pollution Solutions For:  
Restaurants and Other Food Handling Facilities –  
Don't "Feed" The Fishes!***



Everything that is washed into storm drains is untreated and ultimately ends up in the nearest bay. Waste from restaurants can include food waste, grease, detergents and cleaning chemicals. These substances are harmful to aquatic life. Even "biodegradable" products can be harmful.

**Storm drains (nearly all outside drains):** These are intended to collect and transport clean rainfall to the bay. There is no treatment and no contaminants are removed.

**Sanitary sewers (sinks, toilets, floor sinks, and (most) floor drains):** These transport waste to a wastewater treatment plant where some pollutants are removed prior to discharge to the bay.

#### MOP BUCKETS AND SINKS

- Soaps and detergents contain a class of chemicals called surfactants. They are what give soap that slippery feeling. Soaps are toxic to fish at fairly low concentrations.
- Never empty a mop bucket where it will drain into a storm drain. Dump mop buckets into the mop sink.

#### GARBAGE DUMPSTERS

- Leaky dumpsters can contribute pollutants to stormwater.
- Keep the lid closed on the dumpster to keep out rainwater.
- Inspect your dumpster often and notify your waste hauler if your dumpster is leaking. They will repair or replace it for you.

#### GREASE AND OIL

- Oil and grease are known to be toxic to aquatic organisms at relatively low concentrations; they can coat fish gills, prevent oxygen from entering the water, and clog drainage facilities (leading to increased maintenance costs and potential flooding problems).
- Minimize spills when transferring oil and grease.
- If you do get a spill, use dry cleanup methods, such as kitty litter absorbents.
- Maintain grease traps to prevent overflows.

#### SPILLS

- Spills happen. The important thing is to make sure you know how to contain and clean it up, and that you have the right cleanup materials on hand.
- To clean up liquid spills, use an absorbent material, such as kitty litter. Don't let the absorbent materials become too saturated. Dispose of the absorbent material by placing it in a sealed plastic bag and place it in the garbage dumpster.

#### EQUIPMENT CLEANING AND/OR PRESSURE WASHING

- When cleaning floor mats or garbage cans, the wash water is not allowed into the storm drain system.
- Possible options: Use mop sinks or interior floor drains (verify that the floor drain goes to the sanitary sewer) or use a commercial car wash.

