

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

For Stormwater Management at Tire and Battery Automotive Service Facilities



This Best Management Practice (BMP) is intended to provide clarification and guidance regarding the management of Stormwater collecting at Tire & Battery Automotive Service Facilities (TBA).

For purposes of this BMP, Stormwater is separated from “sanitary wastewater” and “process wastewater,” which are managed separately and will be covered in future Best Management Practices.

For clarification, “sanitary wastewater” is normally sent to the local treatment plants through sewers, or in some rural areas treated in a septic system. Although septic systems are disfavored at a TBA, if the facility has ONLY sanitary wastewater, that wastewater may be discharged to a septic system. However, since some states prohibit hand washing water from TBA bathrooms going into a septic system, since they may contain oil and grease, state rules and regulations should be understood if your TBA has a septic system.

In addition, “process wastewaters,” such as floor wash water, tire testing water, tire cleaning water or air compressor condensate, must be managed separately and will be covered under a separate BMP.

Stormwater is the precipitation that accumulates on the TBA property. Normally, this water is diverted to a stormwater system designed to move it efficiently through catchbasins, sewers or ditches away from the property so business may be conducted. While older urban areas may have sewer systems that combine stormwater and process or sanitary wastewaters, newer development normally has separate systems for these flows. Stormwater systems normally flow directly to waters of the state WITHOUT TREATMENT. That is, the water running off your roof and parking lot more than likely flow directly to a local creek, river or lake. Therefore, it is imperative to take steps to minimize water pollution.

It is recognized that quickly moving stormwater from upstream facilities can contribute to flooding downstream. Further, now that modern environmental requirements under the Clean Water Act have addressed sanitary and process wastewaters, a major cause of impaired waterways is now stormwater runoff. TBA stormwater runoff from parking areas can carry oils and greases, antifreeze, particulates, litter, and other automotive materials associated with vehicles. Therefore, clean water agencies and municipalities are now focusing on stormwater and more particularly enforcement of post-construction stormwater requirements.

New facilities may have stormwater detention or retention ponds, or other technologies designed to reduce the environmental impact of stormwaters. Your facility may be required to operate and maintain these facilities. Nevertheless, even if you don’t have specific stormwater requirements there are many best practices TBAs should undertake to minimize their impact on stormwaters. These include:

- Educate your TBA teammates so they are aware of where stormwater flows and what your process and procedures are to keep pollutants out of stormwater.
- You may be required to develop a stormwater management plan or the like.
- Make sure no interior drains discharge to the stormwater system.
- Use identifying symbols (like fish) and language (like “No dumping – drains directly to creek”) on your stormwater catchbasins.
- Be prepared to protect a catchbasin from a major spill with absorbent socks that can encircle a catchbasin sewer cover to keep spilled liquid out. Then use absorbent pads to collect spilled material. The pads can be made from recycled paper fiber or other material that can later be burned for energy recovery.
- Clean up all spills immediately, before they get to a sewer catchbasin.
- Collect leaks from vehicles using drip pans and absorbent so these fluids do not go into the environment. This definitely happens at TBA's so be prepared for it with the necessary equipment.
- Keep all automotive materials such as drums, or aboveground storage tanks under roof and under lock and key.
- Keep your TBA litter free by picking up every scrap of litter once every day.
- Keep an emergency response contractor phone number readily available and have a business arrangement that will enable you to call them in case of a major spill.
- Keep dumpsters closed.

The The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and most states have detailed stormwater best management practices accessible online for additional recommendations.