

Home Improvement Projects and Urban Runoff Pollution

Many of the materials that we use in our home improvement projects have the potential to pollute storm water, if not disposed of properly. Such materials as paint, yard debris, sawdust, stucco, dry wall, dirt, concrete and chemicals, if washed down a storm drain can contaminate our river and beaches. Here is some general information regarding Best Management Practices (BMP's) used for preventing urban runoff pollution.

What is Urban Runoff Pollution?

As a riverside community, Post Falls relies on clean water for its residents, a healthy river, public safety and a desirable environment for wildlife. When it rains, many of the pollutants that get onto our streets, sidewalks, parking lots and gutters wash down the storm drains, and into the nearest body of water. In Post Falls, our major body of water is the Spokane River. Unfortunately, storm drains do not filter water or debris, nor are they connected to the wastewater treatment plant, so any pollutant that flows into the storm drain ends up in the river. Urban runoff pollutants come from many different sources: leaking cars, household chemicals, building materials, pet and yard waste, soil erosion and litter. The good news is that urban runoff pollution is preventable. As Post Falls residents, we can work together to benefit our health, our families and our community.

Paint:

Painting tools should never be rinsed out in the street or any area that might flow to the street. Oil based paints and solvents can only be disposed of at a hazardous waste collection site.

Dirt and Debris:

It is illegal to deposit debris or dirt within the public right of way without permission of the city. If you must temporarily stockpile soil, locate and cover it with a tarp where it cannot be tracked or washed onto the street. Keep trash and other debris contained so that wind cannot blow it off of the property.

Building Materials:

Building materials like sawdust, dirt, grout, mortar, gypsum compound or dry wall mud, plaster or stucco, and concrete cannot be placed upon or washed into swales, streets, gutters or storm drains.

Spills:

If an accidental spill of any liquid building material or other hazardous waste occurs, absorbents or kitty litter must be applied immediately to prevent the spill from entering a storm drain. Once the spill has been contained, contact your trash disposal company or Panhandle Health District for instructions on how to dispose of it.

The City of Post Falls Storm Water Program may be reached at 777-9857.