



Commercial Vehicle Washing

Best Management Practices



What is Stormwater Pollution?

Stormwater is rain and snow melt runoff that travels over surfaces that are not permeable such as asphalt or concrete.

Stormwater pollutants accumulate in Skagway's streets and are flushed into storm drains during rain and snow melt events. Some storm drains have oil water separators, which capture toxic substances, but others lead water directly to Pullen Creek or the Skagway River unfiltered. Many people are unaware that polluting is both an active and passive activity. Pollution includes:

- Water from washing vehicles, tools, and equipment
- Spills from automobiles and storage areas
- Erosion from cleared land
- Pet waste

National, state, and local laws that regulate discharges and dumping into U.S. waters support the goals of the Clean Water Act through permits and fines. In some communities, local laws include a set of Stormwater BMPs; in others, BMPs are voluntary actions that help uphold local laws that promote clean water.

Local Ordinances

In Skagway, clean water standards are addressed through Titles 8 (Health and Safety) and 10 (Vehicles and Traffic) of municipal code. These titles prohibit littering, washing contaminated water into storm drains, and neglecting to clean up vehicle fuel and oil spills on the streets.

<https://www.codepublishing.com/AK/Skagway/>

The 2020 Skagway Comprehensive Plan notes:

Wastewater treatment plant staff recommends eliminating commercial vehicle washing on city streets. Oil and other pollutants wash directly right into creeks and rivers from this activity. It is recommended that the municipality require all commercial vehicle washing to occur off street, either in an area with a stormwater interceptor and maintained oil water separator, or in place with ground filtration.

Commercial Vehicles BMPs

Tourism is Skagway's greatest source of revenue and also its greatest source of pollution. On rainy days streaks of fuel and oil on the streets are very noticeable. Puddles of leaked oil can be seen on all of Skagway's streets.

- Regularly perform checks and maintenance to prevent leaks and spills. Hold vehicle drivers responsible for these tasks and for cleaning up leaks and spills if they do happen
- Make clean-up materials available and easy to find. Create a spill clean-up plan and train vehicle drivers to follow it
- Require responsible fueling. Many fuel leaks on roads may be from overfilling tanks
- Set aside a commercial vehicle washing area containing filtration systems for pollutants
- Use soaps that are phosphorus free



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