

Dumpster Management

Almost every business generates waste and temporarily stores it on-site. Many businesses have dumpsters, compactors or refuse bins. These containers are typically kept behind buildings or in alleys, where they are often out of sight of customers and the general public.

Commercial refuse containers may be a major source of stormwater pollution if they are not properly operated and maintained. Open dumpsters may collect rain water that mixes with the contents of the dumpster. The polluted water often spills or leaks when the container is emptied. Rain may wash leaking materials, spills and trash from dumpsters and compactors into storm drains. Wash water from cleaning refuse receptacles and loading docks is another source of stormwater pollution. Runoff may contain grease, litter, bacteria, pathogens and chemicals. Properly maintained dumpsters and clean loading docks may prevent unsightly conditions and unpleasant odors.

TO PREVENT WATER POLLUTION

- Inspect dumpsters and compactors regularly for leaks (at least once a month).
- Inspect dumpster and compactor area regularly for litter or stains (at least once a week).
- Replace leaking dumpsters, waste containers and compactors as soon as possible (call your waste management contractor for a replacement).
- Control litter by making sure waste is contained in dumpsters and compactors. Sweep loading dock area regularly and place sweepings in the trash.
- Increase receptacle service frequency if capacity is routinely exceeded.
- Avoid or minimize placing liquid waste, grease or leaky garbage bags into dumpsters. Place liquid waste in closed (or sealed) containers for disposal.
- Avoid hosing out the dumpster interior. Apply absorbent materials such as kitty litter over any liquids spilled in the dumpster and dispose of in the trash.
- Keep dumpster lids tightly closed to keep rainwater out and prevent leaks. Replace damaged or missing lids.



TROUBLED WATERS

Consider what materials and pollutants may be present before you wash anything down a storm drain. Only clean, unchlorinated water is allowed into the storm drain, which ends up in our local streams and the Potomac River, a source of our drinking water.



Keep dumpsters and compactors in a covered area. If this is not practical, ensure covers on each receptacle are closed.

- Do not place hazardous waste in a dumpster. Lock the dumpster or enclosure to prevent illegal disposal of hazardous materials.
- Post signs that indicate the materials that can be placed in the container. Check regularly for unacceptable materials.
- Keep dumpsters and compactors in a covered area. If not practical, ensure covers on each receptacle are closed.
- Install berms or curbs around dumpsters and loading docks to contain leaks, spills and trash. Collect any wash water with a wet vacuum system. Contact the Department of Public Works and Environmental Services Industrial Waste Section at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/dpwes/wastewater/#disposal or call 703-550-9740 ext. 252, TTY 711 for information on the proper disposal of the dirty wash water.
- Install a water quality management device to treat runoff from the dumpster area.

Business owners may be able to save money by recycling, which reduces trash disposal costs. County Code requires Fairfax County non-residential properties to recycle, at a minimum, mixed paper and cardboard. Certain non-residential properties must recycle additional materials and all non-residential properties must have a recycling plan. For more information on how to improve or expand your recycling program please visit www.fairfaxcounty.gov/living/recycling.



Department of Public Works and Environmental Services
 Stormwater Planning Division
 12000 Government Center Parkway, Suite 449, Fairfax, VA 22035-0052
 703-324-5500, TTY 711 / SWPDmail@fairfaxcounty.gov
 To request this information in an alternate format call 703-324-5500,
 TTY 711. A Fairfax County, VA., publication March 2013



Post signs that indicate materials that may be placed in the container.



Inspect dumpster area regularly for litter or leaks.