

## Description

Good housekeeping practices are designed to maintain a clean and orderly work environment. The most effective first steps towards preventing pollution in stormwater from work sites simply involve using common sense to improve the facility's basic housekeeping methods. Poor housekeeping practices result in increased waste and potential for stormwater contamination.

A clean and orderly work site reduces the possibility of accidental spills caused by mishandling of chemicals and equipment and should reduce safety hazards to personnel. A well-maintained material and chemical storage area will reduce the possibility of stormwater mixing with pollutants.



**Photograph GH-1.** Use dry clean-up methods to remove spilled materials. Photo courtesy of Colorado Nonpoint Source Program.

Some simple procedures a facility can use to promote good housekeeping include improved operation and maintenance of machinery and processes, material storage practices, material inventory controls, routine and regular clean-up schedules, maintaining well organized work areas, signage, and educational programs for employees and the general public about all of these practices.

## Appropriate Uses

Good housekeeping practices require education and training, typically targeted to industries and businesses, municipal employees, as well as the general public.

## Practice Guidelines

Good housekeeping practices include these general areas:

- Operation and Maintenance
- Material Storage
- Material Inventory
- Training and Participation.

### Operation and Maintenance

Consider implementing the following practices:

- Maintain dry and clean floors and ground surfaces by using brooms, shovels, vacuums or cleaning machines, rather than wet clean-up methods.
- Regularly collect and dispose of garbage and waste material.

- Routinely inspect equipment to ensure that it is functioning properly without leaking and conduct preventative maintenance and needed repairs.
- Train employees on proper clean up and spill response procedures.
- Designate separate areas of the site for auto parking, vehicle refueling and routine maintenance.
- Promptly clean up leaks, drips and other spills.
- Cover and maintain dumpsters and waste receptacles. Add additional dumpsters or increase frequency of waste collection if overflowing conditions reoccur.
- Where outdoor painting and sanding occur, implement these practices:
  - Conduct these activities in designated areas that provide adequate protection to prevent overspray and uncontrolled emissions. All operations should be conducted on paved surfaces to facilitate cleanup.
  - Use portable containment as necessary for outside operations.
  - Clean up and properly dispose of excess paint, paint chips, protective coatings, grit waste, etc.
- Maintain vegetation on facility grounds in a manner that minimizes erosion. Follow the Landscape Maintenance and Pesticide, Herbicide and Fertilizer Usage BMPs to ensure that minimum amounts of chemicals needed for healthy vegetation are applied in a manner that minimizes transport of these materials in runoff.

### **Material Storage Practices**

Proper storage techniques include the following:

- Provide adequate aisle space to facilitate material transfer and ease of access for inspection.
- Store containers, drums, and bags away from direct traffic routes to reduce container damage resulting in accidental spills.
- Stack containers according to manufacturer's instructions to avoid damaging the containers from improper weight distribution. Also store materials in accordance with directions in Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs).
- Store containers on pallets or similar devices to prevent corrosion of containers that results from containers coming in contact with moisture on the ground.
- Store toxic or hazardous liquids within curbed areas or secondary containers.

### **Material Inventory Practices**

An up-to-date materials inventory can keep material costs down by preventing overstocking, track how materials are stored and handled onsite, and identify which materials and activities pose the most risk to the environment. Assign responsibility of hazardous material inventory to individuals trained to handle such materials. A material inventory should include these steps:

- Identify all chemical substances present at work site. Perform a walk-through of the site, review

purchase orders, list all chemical substances used and obtain Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) for all chemicals.

- Label all containers. Labels should provide name and type of substance, stock number, expiration date, health hazards, handling suggestions, and first aid information. Much of this information can be found on an MSDS.
- Clearly identify special handling, storage, use and disposal considerations for hazardous materials on the material inventory.
- Institute a shelf-life program to improve material tracking and inventory that can reduce the amount of materials that are overstocked and ensure proper disposal of expired materials. Careful tracking of materials ordered can result in more efficient materials use. Decisions on the amounts of hazardous materials that are stored on site should include an evaluation of any emergency control systems that are in place. All storage areas for hazardous materials should be designed to contain spills.

## **Training and Participation**

Frequent and proper training in good housekeeping techniques reduces the likelihood that chemicals or equipment will be mishandled. To promote good housekeeping, consider implementing these practices:

- Discuss good housekeeping practices in training programs and meetings.
- Publicize pollution prevention concepts through posters or signs.
- Post bulletin boards with updated good housekeeping procedures, tips and reminders.