
BULLETIN 2000-052-EV

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CARPET CLEANERS AND JANITORIAL SERVICES

Carpet cleaners and janitorial services use a number of products and solutions to clean, sanitize and deodorize various components of buildings. Many of these solutions and products can be toxic, corrosive or flammable.

Wastewater from carpet cleaning and janitorial operations contain sediments, chemicals and other contaminants. When the wastewater is poured or discharged to streets, lanes, parking lot drains or storm drains it enters the storm sewer system. Storm sewers are connected to the nearest body of water where contaminants can be toxic to fish and the environment.

Solvents used for cleaning can be flammable and can create explosive conditions in the sewer system, therefore solvents must not be allowed to enter any drain, plumbing fixture or sewer at any time.

Best Management Practices

To reduce the amount of contaminants from entering the storm sewer system and the environment, at a minimum, the following should be practised:

- Use products that are environmentally friendly or less hazardous than the products you currently use.
- Always follow the manufacturer's directions regarding use and disposal methods.
- Cleaning, sanitizing and deodorizing chemicals must be stored in a secure area where spills will be contained and will not enter the sewer system.
- Follow the instructions for recommended disposal. Old cleaning, sanitizing and deodorizing chemicals may require special disposal. For further disposal information contact the B.C. Recycling Hotline at www.rcbc.ca.
- Wash water is not to be placed, poured or allowed to enter any drains connected to the storm sewer system. Wash-water that is acceptable for disposal to the sewer system must be poured or discharged to a fixture connected to the sanitary sewer system.
- Solvents must not be allowed to enter any drain or any other part of the sewer system.
- Mobile carpet cleaners should dispose of their liquid wastes into a fixture connected to the sanitary sewer system at the client's premises or trucked to an approved disposal facility.

Spills

Spills of cleaning solutions and solvents must be cleaned up immediately. Spills should be contained, curbed or other measures taken to prevent the spill from entering the sewer system or the environment.

Some of the chemicals used may be flammable, toxic, corrosive or have other hazardous properties. Do not attempt to clean up spills of concentrated chemicals that are hazardous or have flammable, toxic or corrosive fumes. Call the Fire Department immediately at 911.

Enforcement

Section 3.2(1) of the Sewer and Watercourse By-law No. 8093 states that, "No person shall cause or permit contaminated water or wastewater to be discharged to a storm sewer." Violations are subject to fines of up to \$10,000 per offence.

For further information contact the Environmental Protection Branch at 604 873-7000, 311 or at environmentalprotection@vancouver.ca.

(Original signed by)

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