

# WaterWatch



## Handling Spills Around Your Home or Business

Whether it is changing your oil, painting your house or applying pesticide, homeowners often encounter hazardous substances around their own home. For this reason it is a good idea to prepare a spill kit to help clean up spills around your home.

A spill kit is a collection of items useful for the cleanup of spills, drips and leaks around your property. Some items that should be included in a spill kit are:

1.) Protective gear. Probably the most useful item in this category would be rubber gloves.

2.) Clean up gear. This would include absorbents like kitty litter and a whisk broom and dust pan. Another option would be absorbent rags

3.) Containment gear. This would be anything used to collect the spill and stop the leak, typically plastic bags.

A 5-gallon bucket with a lid makes a great portable place to stash your kit. Put the plastic bags in the bottom. Put the absorbents and the whisk and dustpan in next. Then put the protective gear on top.

Be sure to label your spill kit clearly and store it in an accessible place. Inform everyone who needs to know where the kit is and how to use it.

Being prepared will always pay off in being able to

confidently address a spill or leak.



## Why Are Concrete Washouts So Important?

Concrete is a mixture of cement, water, and aggregate material. Cement is made by heating a mixture of limestone and clay containing oxides of calcium, aluminum, silicon and other metals in a kiln and then pulverizing it. Aggregate particles can be as fine as sand. Or as coarse as gravel or crushed stone.

When cement is mixed with water, a chemical reaction called hydration occurs, which produces glue that binds the aggregates together to make concrete.

At the end of each work day, the drums of concrete trucks must be washed out. This is customarily done at the ready mixed batch plants, which are usually off-site facilities, however large or rural construction projects may have on-site batch plants. Concrete truck chutes, on the other hand are washed out immediately at the site

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*If you wouldn't drink it, don't dump it!*

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of the pour. Washwater and solids also come from using such construction materials as mortar, plaster, stucco, and grout.



### Concrete Washout Water and Environmental and Human Health Impacts

Concrete washout water (or washwater) is a slurry containing toxic metals. It's also caustic and corrosive, having a pH near 12. In com-

parison, Drano liquid drain cleaner has a pH of 13.5. Caustic washwater can harm fish gills and eyes and interfere with reproduction. The safe pH ranges for aquatic life habitats are 6.5 – 9 for freshwater and 6.5 – 8.5 for saltwater.

### BMP (Best Management Practice)

The best management practice objectives for concrete washout are to (a) collect and retain all the concrete washout water and solids

in leak proof containers, so that this caustic material does not reach the soil surface and then migrate to surface waters or into the ground water, and (b) recycle 100 percent of the collected concrete washout water and solids.

**24-Hour  
Stormwater Hotline:  
801-229-7577**

## Dealing with Pet Waste

One of the least pleasant parts of owning a dog is taking care of the waste they produce. Pet waste is not only unpleasant to smell or step in, it is also a potential hazard for water quality.

The most obvious danger from pet waste is the potential or bacterial contamination and exposure to parasites. Fecal matter can cause disease to be passed between animals and can pass

disease to humans.

The best and safest way to handle pet waste is to bag it, close the bag securely and throw the bagged waste into the garbage.

To assist with this practice, many city parks and city-owned parkways are equipped with pet waste bag dispensers. Please take advantage of these facilities next time you take your dog for a walk.



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