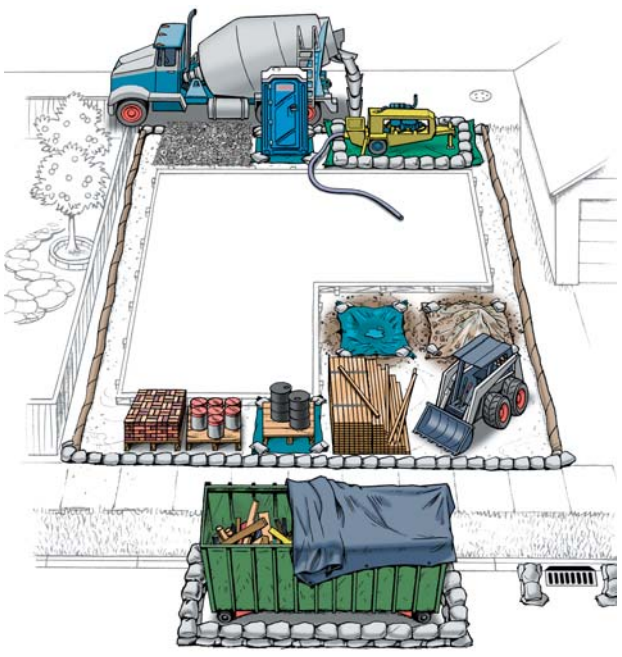
# A Pollution Prevention Guide for the Construction Industry



## North County Storm Water Program

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**Only Rain in the Storm Drain**

## Water Quality Regulations for Construction Sites

In 1972, the Environmental Protection Agency developed regulations to control water pollution. As a result, the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit was created. NPDES permits are issued to municipalities as well as construction sites. In addition to complying with local regulations, which are governed by our municipal NPDES permit, you may be required to obtain a permit through the State of California under the State General Construction Permit (99-08-DWQ). All construction sites over one acre are required to obtain coverage under this permit.

Construction sites can contribute pollutants, such as sediment, metals, and chemicals, to our local creeks, rivers, lakes, lagoons, and ocean. These pollutants make their way down our streets and into storm drains, eventually discharging to the nearest body of water.

All construction sites are required to implement Best Management Practices (BMP) to prevent storm water pollution. This brochure is intended to assist your construction site in understanding BMP requirements.

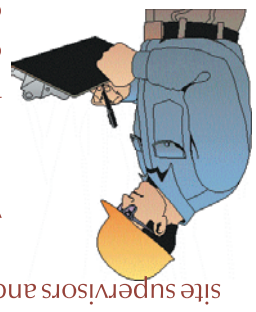
Each municipality has one or more persons dedicated to ensuring that all construction sites are in compliance with state and local storm water control regulations. Contact your local municipality for further information.

## Right-of-Way Permitting

We understand that there are times when space on construction sites is limited. If at any point, you (as a contractor or subcontractor) need to use the public right-of-way in order to work or store materials, you must apply for a special permit. This permit allows you to use the City's right-of-way areas, and describes what is required to prevent illegal contaminants from entering local storm drains. For more information or to obtain a permit application contact your local jurisdiction.

## Inspection and Enforcement Program

Each jurisdiction has established an enforcement program to ensure that all businesses operate in compliance with all appropriate storm water laws and other City requirements. Contractors, site supervisors and property owners can be held responsible for violations, which may lead to a civil penalty of up to $10,000 per day and/or reimbursing the local jurisdiction for all expenses associated with clean up.



## Best Management Practices

Construction materials such as paint, dirt and trash often find their way into our storm drains, polluting the environment and jeopardizing our creeks, rivers, lakes, lagoons, and ocean.

The NCSWP is working with contractors to implement what are known as Best Management Practices (BMPs) on all construction sites. That is, methods used to keep pollution out of our storm drains and off public property, such as sidewalks, streets, parkways and alleys. Carrying out and maintaining these BMPs on the construction site is critical to protecting our ocean and lagoons.

The following is a list of BMPs and pollution prevention measures that shall be implemented at all construction sites:

1. **Conduct daily site cleanings.**
2. **Develop spill response and containment procedures.**
3. **Educate employees and subcontractors about BMPs.**
4. **Develop an erosion control plan for wind and rain.**
5. **Regularly maintain all BMPs at project site.**

Dear Contractor,

The North County Storm Water Program (NCSWP) is a collective of jurisdictions in northern San Diego County working together to protect our watersheds. We believe that reducing pollution is critical to maintaining our communities' way of life.

It is our hope that this brochure will help you identify activities that are recognized to cause water pollution and implement appropriate Best Management Practices (BMPs) to minimize their impact. By providing you with these tools, we hope to make your job easier while keeping our waterways clean.

Each jurisdiction will be inspecting their construction sites to ensure the protection of water quality. We look forward to seeing the BMPs presented in this brochure implemented at your sites.

Together we have the ability to preserve and improve the quality of life in our communities.

Sincerely,

*The North County Storm Water Program*

**Contact Phone Numbers:**

City of Carlsbad
760-602-2719

City of San Marcos
760-744-1050

City of Encinitas
760-633-2787

City of Del Mar
858-755-9313

City of Oceanside
760-435-5800

City of Solana Beach
858-720-2470

City of Vista
760-726-1340

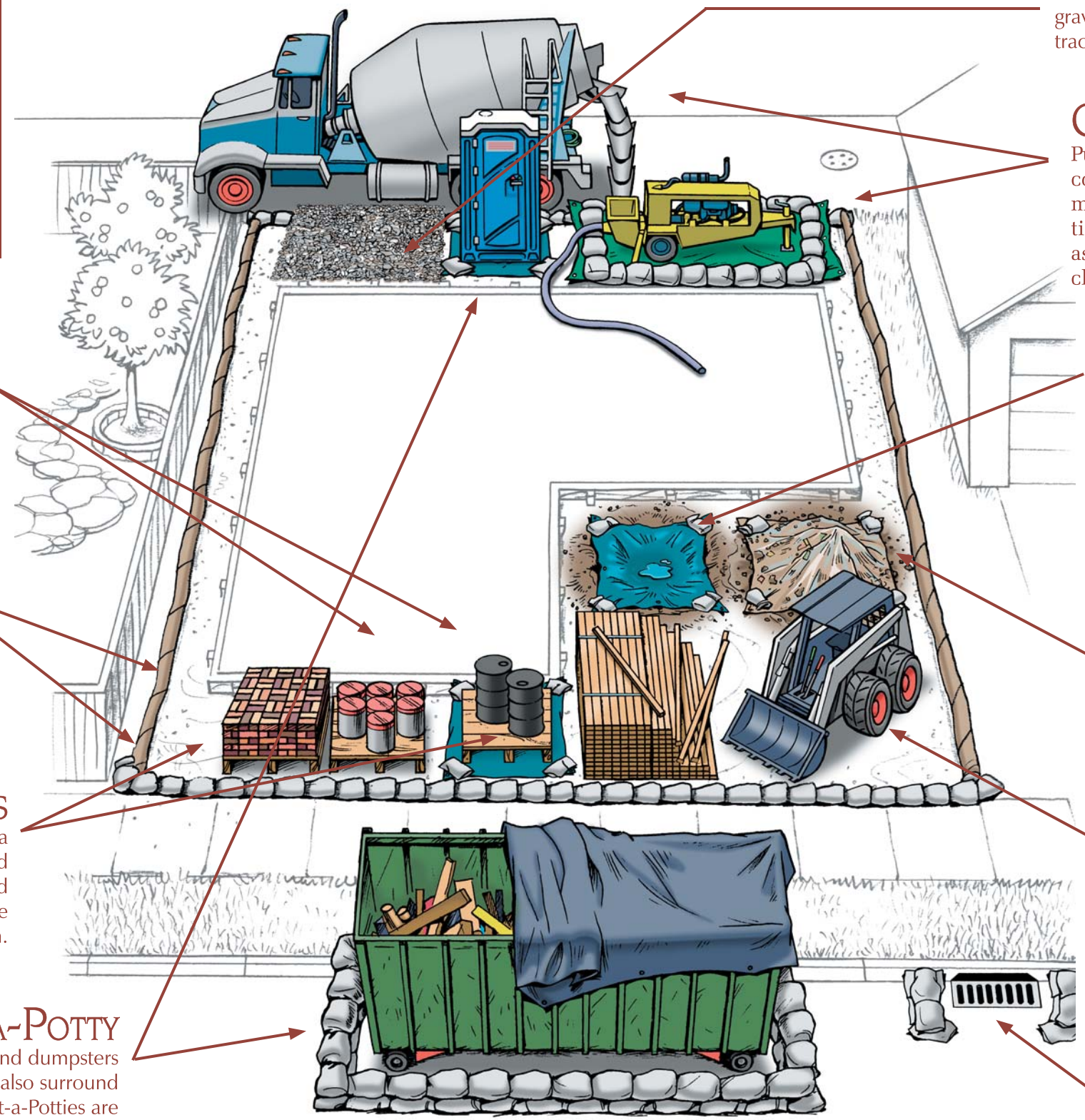
# Best Management Practices

## Site Overview

Protecting our water resources improves our quality of life and preserves the local environment for our children and future generations.

Untreated storm water and/or unintentional spills at work sites can flow into storm drains and pollute creeks, rivers, lakes, lagoons or the ocean. These discharges are prohibited by law.

The following drawing illustrates Best Management Practices (BMPs) that are recommended for construction sites in North County cities to protect storm drains and minimize pollution. Please check for local requirements.



## Materials Storage

All building materials and fuel stored on the site must be contained and covered. It is illegal for contractors to wash out paint brushes in the street or dump any residues in the storm drain. Paint brushes and spray guns must be contained and disposed of properly.

## Perimeter controls

Gravel bags, silt fences, and straw wattles are acceptable perimeter controls, and must be used to surround the entire site to control run-on and run-off. Avoid running over perimeter controls with vehicles or heavy equipment, as they can damage the materials. Keep extra absorbent materials and/or a wet/dry vacuum on site to quickly pick up unintended spills. Sites must also be checked and maintained daily.

## Building materials/staging areas

Construction materials must be stored on site at all times unless a right-of-way permit has been obtained. Building materials should always be covered when not in use to prevent run-off caused by wind or rain. To apply for a right-of-way permit, contact the appropriate department of your local jurisdiction.

## Dumpsters/Port-a-Potty

Always cover dumpsters with a rollback tarp. Areas around dumpsters should be swept daily. Perimeter controls should also surround dumpsters and all Port-a-Potties. If dumpsters or Port-a-Potties are kept on the street, right-of-way permits are needed.

## Tracking Controls

All entrances and exits on the site must have coarse gravel or steel shaker plates to limit offsite sediment tracking.

## Concrete Trucks/Pumpers

Pumpers must be surrounded by perimeter controls, such as gravel bags. Plastic sheets also must be placed beneath concrete pumpers at all times., and residual materials must be cleaned up as well. Washout areas must be used whenever cleaning trucks.

## Washout area

The disposal of "wet" construction materials should be handled in the washout area. This includes paint, stucco and concrete. Use a berm and/or plastic sheet to collect and contain liquids and prevent run-off in nearby areas. The washout area must be checked and maintained daily to ensure compliance. Washout liquids must be disposed of properly.

## Dirt and grading

Mounds of dirt or gravel should be stored on site. These materials should also be covered each day with a tarp, coconut mat, or other form of protection. Visqueen and/or tarps must be available and on site to cover 125% of exposed areas during the rainy season (October – April).

## Earthmoving equipment

All earthmoving equipment should be stored on site. Maintenance should also be conducted on the site, and tracks and trails left by equipment leading to and from the site should be cleaned up immediately.

## Storm drains

Storm drains must be protected at all times with perimeter controls, such as gravel bags or straw wattles. Sediment accumulation should be removed frequently.

**These guidelines are generalized. Please check specific requirements with your local jurisdiction.**