

**Best Management Practice (BMP)  
Water Quality Protection Guideline  
Retail Auto Supply**

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**Section 1. Introduction**

According to the EPA, the majority of water pollution in our streams today is directly caused by pollutants that have been dumped or spilled onto the ground and that are then washed from these surfaces into our creeks and streams by rainwater. This pollution is caused by many different sources and activities, each of which may seem insignificant when considered in isolation. However, storm water runoff, acting as nature's bath, has the effect of collecting and combining each of these small pollutant sources, which drain into a local stream and causes significant levels of water pollution.



Retail auto supply stores have the potential to contribute hazardous chemicals into our waterways. Mismanagement of waste storage areas (waste oil and solid waste), surface cleaning, outdoor work on vehicles, and spills from vehicle fluids can all contribute pollutants to the waterways.

Pollution from these activities can be minimized or eliminated through the implementation of the simple water quality best management practices (BMPs) contained within this guideline.

This guideline is intended to provide minimum requirements for compliance with Gwinnett County's Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connection (IDIC) Ordinance (Chapter 100, Gwinnett County Code of Ordinances). It is expected that individuals and companies involved in retail auto supply will fully implement these guidelines and take any additional necessary and reasonable actions, as needed on a case-by-case basis, to prevent storm water pollution.

**Section 2. Purpose**

The purpose of this Water Quality Protection Guideline is to:

- (1) Provide details of water quality BMPs that may be implemented to assist in controlling pollutants associated with auto repair operations;
- (2) Serve as a reference for regulators, inspectors and others who assess the water quality impacts of these activities; and
- (3) Provide guidance that, if implemented, will assist in securing compliance with Gwinnett County's Illicit Discharge and Illegal Connection (IDIC) Ordinance.

**Section 3. Best Management Practices**

Auto waste and other pollutants generated during business conducted at any auto supply store must never be allowed to enter into a storm drain. All pollutants should be properly managed, contained, and disposed of in accordance with this guideline.

## 3.1 Management of Waste Storage Area

### 3.1.1 Managing Waste Oil

- (1) Train employees on the proper methods for handling and storing used oil. Following are some tips for employees to follow:
  - a.) Label all containers and tanks as *"Used Motor Oil"*.
  - b.) Keep containers and tanks in good condition. Don't allow tanks to rust, leak or deteriorate. Repair defects immediately.
  - c.) Never store used motor oil in anything other than tanks and storage containers.
  - d.) Store used motor oil in safe areas away from workers.
  - e.) Do not mix used motor oil with anything. Store separately from absorbents and chemicals.
- (2) Do not contaminate waste oil with even small amounts of gasoline, brake cleaner, carb cleaner, or other solvents. Small amounts of solvents can turn recyclable oil into a hazardous waste.
- (3) Keep storage containers closed when not in use.
- (4) When storing drums keep an aisle space between drums to allow for inspections for leaks and damage.
- (5) Install secondary containment around drums to prevent spills from releasing into the environment.
- (6) Inspect drums and secondary containment weekly.
- (7) Keep spill material and equipment near waste oil storage areas.

### 3.1.2 Managing Solid Waste

- (1) Sweep dumpster area daily.
- (2) Keep lids closed on dumpsters/containers and make sure they have drainage plugs securely inserted.
- (3) Where possible locate dumpsters under cover to prevent storm water from entering this potentially contaminated area.
- (4) Do not place any liquids in dumpsters.

## 3.2 Cleanup and Washwater Disposal

- (1) Dispose of any mop water to the sanitary sewer. There is usually a sink inside the bathroom where you can any dump mop water. You can also use the toilet to dispose of any mop water.
- (2) Where possible use absorbents and dry cleanup methods when cleaning up spills. Dry absorbents should be worked into the spill and swept up for disposal within 30 minutes of application.
- (3) Bag any absorbent and dispose of it into the dumpster. Make sure any absorbent you put into the dumpster is dry.
- (4) Confirm all internal drains are properly connected into the sanitary or septic system.

## 3.3 Surface Cleaning

- (1) Do not allow surface cleaning wash water to enter into the storm drains.
- (2) Surface cleaning should be completed in accordance with the "WQ-01 Surface Cleaning Water Quality Guideline." This guideline and more information can be found on the Gwinnett County Stormwater website at [www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com).

### 3.4 Outdoor Auto Repair/Clean Oil Storage

- (1) Place drip pans under cars with known leaks that are stored outside.
- (2) Place "No Auto Work in Parking Lot" signs in parking lot. Allowing customers to work on their automobiles outside the store can lead to contaminants being spilled or dumped onto the ground and then washed into nearby storm drains.
- (3) Only perform fluid transfers inside the facility.
- (4) Always keep auto hoods down when stored outside.
- (5) Store all hazardous waste properly (i.e. labeled, covered, and with secondary containment).
- (6) Only perform auto repairs in properly outfitted facilities, i.e. garage or a mechanics' shop.
- (7) Store clean oil away from bay doors or exits leading outside of store or shop.
- (8) Keep spill material and equipment near area where oil is stored.
- (9) Store clean oil away from anything that could possibly puncture oil containers.



### 3.5 Protect and Maintain Storm Drain Inlets

- (1) Label storm drain inlets on your property to alert employees and customers that no dumping of wastewaters or polluted wash water is allowed. Information about stenciling storm drains can be found on the Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful website at [www.gwinnettcba.org](http://www.gwinnettcba.org).
- (2) Prevent accumulated pollutants from washing down storm drains on your property by inspecting drains on premises frequently.
- (3) Remove debris from in and around drains and dispose of it in the trash. Make sure that any trash or debris that you put in the dumpster is dry.

## Section 4. General

- (1) It is illegal to dispose of any waste or pollutants into the storm sewer system. Penalties for non-compliance include fines of up to \$1,000 and/or 60 days in county jail.
- (2) To report a spill or discharge into the storm sewer system contact Gwinnett County's Storm Water Management Division's 24-hour call center at 678-376-7000.
- (3) Additional information regarding water quality, storm water programs and storm water best management practice implementation can be obtained by contacting Gwinnett County's Storm Water Management Division at 678-376-7000 or visiting [www.gwinnettstormwater.com](http://www.gwinnettstormwater.com).

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