

SURFACE AND GROUNDWATER PROTECTION

FOR AUTO REPAIR SHOPS

In November 2006, members of the Auto Repair Shop industry sector on Saipan met with CNMI DEQ in a roundtable discussion to identify high-priority areas for preventing pollution and improving environmental compliance. Surface water and groundwater protection emerged as an important responsibility for shop owners and a topic DEQ will focus on during 2007.

SAIPAN DEPENDS ON CLEAN WATER FOR DRINKING AND TOURISM!



- Storm water at auto repair shops can carry harmful chemicals, trash, and topsoil into the environment.
- Contaminated storm water can carry pollutants into reservoirs, creeks, and the ocean.
- Chemicals (such as oil and gasoline) can also contaminate soils and groundwater used for drinking.

Contaminated Storm Water Affects Saipan's:

People: Contaminated storm water can cause illness and disease in humans.

Environment: Contaminated storm water can damage the beautiful and unique environmental beauty on Saipan.

Tourism: Contaminated storm water can impact tourism that is so important to the local economy. Storm water can carry chemicals as well as litter and trash from auto shops.

Releasing shop fluids directly into drains pollutes water resources and is strictly prohibited.

HOW TO BE A CLEAN AND GREEN SHOP: 7 STRATEGIES FOR PREVENTING POLLUTION

#1 – Do Your Work Over Concrete or Asphalt

Let's face it, spills and drips happen during vehicle repair and maintenance. The environmental is polluted every time oil or other chemicals fall onto bare ground and can affect Saipan's water resources. Therefore, always perform work on a concrete or asphalt surface; tarps and plastic sheeting can be used for temporary situations).

#2 – Store Containers of Oil, Gas, and Chemicals Covered and Off the Ground

All liquids used in the shop (oil, gas, etc.) should be stored off the ground in a covered location. Use wood or plastic pallets to prevent contact with ground and storm water runoff.



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#3 – “Stop if there’s a drop.”

Train shop workers to clean up even the smallest spill immediately using shop rags, absorbent wipes, or absorbent (sometimes called “floor sweep” or “kitty litter”) to prevent anything from leaving the shop with rainwater or even the bottom of worker’s shoes! There should never be puddles of oil on the shop floor or on top of drums. But spill supplies from your auto supply store or on-line (for example, www.newpig.com).



#4 – Divert Storm Water Flows Away From Work Areas

Use berms or curbs of soil, concrete, or plastic to prevent storm water from flowing through shop where oils or other fluids are stored or used. Repair any roof leaks.

#5 – Protect Drains from Shop Liquids



Protect any floor drains in your shop from spills and prevent storm water from flowing through your shop! Surround drains with absorbent “pigs” or “socks” to capture chemicals from entering the drain. And replace the absorbents when they are saturated or at least every 6 months.

#6 – Clean Up Litter and Properly Store Trash

Keep your shop and property free from litter – always. Trash should be stored in covered containers. Don’t let containers overflow onto the ground protect containers from rain. Don’t let your shop be an eyesore to neighbors or customers!

#7 – Store Junk Cars Responsibly or Get Rid of Them

Many shops store junk cars and use them for parts. But, junk cars often contain chemicals that can leak into the environment or become homes to rats and other animals. If you have junk cars:

- Drain the coolant, oil, fuel, hydraulic and brake fluids before storage
- Remove the battery and any loose parts and debris from the car
- Store cars without wheels/tires on blocks
- Regularly remove weeds from around the junk car (an inspector should be able to walk freely around car)



Call CNMI DEQ at 670-664-8500 for more ideas about environmental protection and information about complying with local regulations.

