



WATER AND SEWER UTILITY OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE

Although the operation and maintenance of public utilities are not considered themselves a chronic source of stormwater pollution, some activities and accidents can result in the discharge of pollutants that can pose a threat to both human health and the quality of receiving waters if they enter the storm drain system. Activities associated with the operation and maintenance of water and sewer utilities to prevent and handle such incidents include the following:

- 1. Water Line Maintenance**
- 2. Sanitary Sewer Maintenance**
- 3. Spill/Leak/Overflow Control, Response, and Containment**

Cities that do not provide maintenance of water and sewer utilities should coordinate with the contracting agency responsible for these activities and ensure that these model procedures are followed.

POLLUTION PREVENTION:

Pollution prevention measures have been considered and incorporated in the model procedures. Implementation of these measures may be more effective and reduce or eliminate the need to implement other more complicated or costly procedures. Possible pollution prevention measures for water and sewer utility operation and maintenance include:

- Inspect potential non-storm water discharge flow paths and clear/cleanup any debris or pollutants found (i.e. remove trash, leaves, sediment, and wipe up liquids, including oil spills).
- Once per year, educate municipal staff on pollution prevention measures.

MODEL PROCEDURES:

1. Water Line Maintenance

Procedures can be employed to reduce pollutants from discharges associated with water utility operation and maintenance activities. Planned discharges may include fire hydrant testing, flushing water supply mains after new construction, flushing lines due to complaints of taste and odor, dewatering mains for maintenance work. Unplanned discharges from treated, recycled water, raw water, and groundwater systems operation and maintenance activities can occur from water main breaks, sheared fire hydrants, equipment malfunction, and operator error.

Planned Discharges

- ✓ For planned discharges use one of the following options:
 - Reuse water for dust suppression, irrigation, or construction compaction
 - Discharge to the sanitary sewer system with approval
 - Discharge to the storm drain system or to a creek using applicable pollution control measures listed below (this option is ONLY applicable to uncontaminated pumped ground water, water line flushing, fire hydrant testing and flushing, discharges from potable water sources other than water main breaks) and may require a permit from the Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- ✓ If water is discharged to a storm drain inlet (catch basin), control measures must be put in place to control potential pollutants (i.e. sediment, chlorine, etc.). Examples of some storm drain inlet protection options include:
 - Silt fence – appropriate where the inlet drains a relatively flat area.
 - Gravel and wire mesh sediment filter – Appropriate where concentrated flows are expected.
 - Wooden weir and fabric – use at curb inlets where a compact installation is desired.
- ✓ Prior to discharge, inspect discharge flow path and clear/cleanup any debris or pollutants found (i.e. remove trash, leaves, sediment, and wipe up liquids, including oil spills).
- ✓ Select appropriate pollution control measure(s) considering the receiving system (i.e. curb inlet, drop inlet, culvert, creek, etc.) and ensure that the control device(s) fit properly.

- ✓ General design considerations for inlet protection devices include the following:
 - The device should be constructed such that cleaning and disposal of trapped sediment is made easy, while minimizing interference with discharge activities.
 - Devices should be constructed so that any standing water resulting from the discharge will not cause excessive inconvenience or flooding/damage to adjacent land or structures.
- ✓ The effectiveness of control devices must be monitored during the discharge period and any necessary repairs or modifications made as needed.

OPTIONAL:

- Sediment removal may be enhanced by placing filter fabric, gravel bags, etc. at storm drain inlets.

Unplanned Discharges

- ✓ Stop the discharge as quickly as possible by turning off water source.
- ✓ Inspect flow path of the discharged water:
 - Control erosion along the flow path.
 - Identify areas that may produce significant sediment or gullies, use sandbags to redirect the flow.
 - Identify erodible areas which may need to be repaired or protected during subsequent repairs or corrective actions
- ✓ If repairs or corrective action will cause additional discharges of water, select the appropriate procedures for erosion control, chlorine residual, turbidity, and chemical additives. Prevent potential pollutants from entering the flow path and ensure that no additional discharged water enters storm drain inlets.

2. Sanitary Sewer Maintenance

Applicable to municipalities who own and operated a sewage collection system. Facilities that are covered under this program include sanitary sewer pipes and pump stations owned and operated by the Permittee. The owner of the sanitary sewer facilities is the entity responsible for carrying out this prevention and response program.

Sewer System Cleaning

- ✓ Sewer lines should be cleaned on a regular basis to remove grease, grit, and other debris that may lead to sewer backups.
- ✓ Establish routine maintenance program. Cleaning should be conducted at an established minimum frequency and more frequently for problem areas such as restaurants that are identified
- ✓ Cleaning activities may require removal of tree roots and other identified obstructions.

Preventative and Corrective Maintenance

- ✓ During routine maintenance and inspection note the condition of sanitary sewer structures and identify areas that need repair or maintenance. Items to note may include the following:
 - cracked/deteriorating pipes
 - leaking joints/seals at manhole
 - frequent line plugs
 - line generally flows at or near capacity
 - suspected infiltration or exfiltration
- ✓ Document suggestions and requests for repair and report the information to the appropriate manager or supervisor.
- ✓ Prioritize repairs based on the nature and severity of the problem. Immediate clearing of blockage or repair is required where an overflow is currently occurring or for urgent problems that may cause an imminent overflow (e.g. pump station failures, sewer line ruptures, sewer line blockages). These repairs may be temporary until scheduled or capital improvements can be completed.
- ✓ Review previous sewer maintenance records to help identify "hot spots" or areas with frequent maintenance problems and locations of potential system failure.

3. Spill/Leak/Overflow Control, Response, and Containment

Control

Also see Drainage System procedures sheet

- ✓ Refer to countywide *Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination Program*. Components of this program include:
 - Investigation/inspection and follow-up
 - Elimination of illicit discharges and connections
 - Enforcement of ordinances
 - Respond to sewage spills

- Facilitate public reporting of illicit discharges and connections. A citizen's hotline for reporting observed overflow conditions should be established to supplement the field screening efforts being conducted by the Principal Permittee.

Response and Containment

- ✓ Establish lead department/agency responsible for spill response and containment. Provide coordination within departments.
- ✓ When a spill, leak, and/or overflow occurs, keep sewage from entering the storm drain system to the maximum extent practicable by covering or blocking storm drain inlets or by containing and diverting the sewage away from open channels and other storm drain facilities (using sandbags, inflatable dams, etc.).
- ✓ If a spill reaches the storm drain notify County of Orange Health Care Agency through Control One at (714) 628-7208.
- ✓ Remove the sewage using vacuum equipment or use other measures to divert it back to the sanitary sewer system.
- ✓ Record required information at the spill site.
- ✓ Perform field tests as necessary to determine the source of the spill.
- ✓ Develop additional notification procedures regarding spill reporting as needed.

LIMITATIONS:

Private property access rights needed to perform testing along storm drain right-of-ways. Requirements of municipal ordinance authority for suspected source verification testing necessary for guaranteed rights of entry.

REFERENCES:

California Storm Water Best Management Practice Handbooks. Municipal Best Management Practice Handbook. Prepared by Camp Dresser & McKee, Larry Walker Associates, Uribe and Associates, Resources Planning Associates for Stormwater Quality Task Force. March 1993.

Los Angeles County Stormwater Quality. Public Agency Activities Model Program. On-line:
http://ladpw.org/wmd/npdes/public_TC.cfm

Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program. 1997 Urban Runoff Management Plan. September 1997, updated October 2000.

Santa Clara Valley Urban Runoff Pollution Prevention Program. Water Utility Pollution Prevention Plan.