

## Keeping pollutants from food facilities out of the storm drain

helps the environment. Everything that washes into storm drains is untreated and ultimately ends up in our creeks and rivers.

Food waste in storm drains creates odors and also sustains populations of cockroaches, flies and rats. Detergents, cleaners and grease are harmful to aquatic life. Even “biodegradable” cleansers can be harmful when poured down the storm drain.

It is important to *never* put wastes from *equipment cleaning, dumpsters, mop buckets, & grease bins* into the storm drain.



Food facilities such as restaurants, cafeterias, bakeries, coffee shops and grocery stores that send wastewater, grease and other materials into the storm drain are likely to be violating their local ordinances and codes.

### Additional Resources

Visit the **Green Country Stormwater Alliance (GCSA)** website listed below for more details about stormwater protection, including Best Management Practices (BMPs) and other pollution reduction strategies.



**Green Country Stormwater Alliance**  
[www.stormwaterok.net](http://www.stormwaterok.net)

### Contact Information:

For information about Green Country Stormwater Alliance, contact INCOG at 918-584-7526 or by email at [stormwater@incog.org](mailto:stormwater@incog.org). For local information, contact your city or county stormwater coordinator.

For more information about stormwater protection, contact the Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) Water Quality Division at 405-702-8100 or visit the DEQ web site at: <https://www.deq.ok.gov/water-quality-division/stormwater/>

For stormwater related complaints, call the DEQ statewide hotline at 1-800-522-0206. This number is answered 24-7. Citizens may fill out an online complaint form at the DEQ web site at <https://www.deq.ok.gov/environmental-complaints/> and submit it electronically to DEQ. The site also provides contact links to DEQ.

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## A Food Service Guide to Waste Disposal





## A Closer Look at

# Food Service Industry Waste

### Food Service Pollutants

Food service employees should be trained to keep food pollutants out of storm drains. Employees should be aware of the harmful effects of wastewater and food waste on water quality. Important tips to remember:



### Mops

- Never empty mop buckets into a storm drain. Always use the mop sink.
- Keep the mop sink accessible. Don't use it to store materials or equipment.

### Outdoor Cleaning & Washing

- Clean floor mats, garbage cans and equipment at a mop sink or floor drain.
- For large items that cannot be cleaned indoors, consider the following:
  - Construct a permanent wash pad that is connected to a sanitary sewer.
  - Use a temporary containment area (see "Steam Cleaning Equipment" in the phone book).
  - Hire a cleaning service with the right equipment to collect and dispose of wastewater.
- Wastewater from outside wash areas should be discharged to the sanitary sewer or properly disposed of without letting it flow into the storm drains.

- Use dry cleanup methods to clean outside areas whenever possible.
- Restaurants that use outside companies to do their outside washing are still responsible if wastewater is improperly disposed of into the storm drain.

### Outdoor Spills

- For outdoor spills, use a mop, rag or absorbent material (such as kitty litter) to clean spills.
- Always keep used absorbent material out of the storm drain. Don't let the absorbent material get saturated. Dispose of it by placing it in a sealed plastic bag and place it in the Dumpster.

### Cleaning Fluids

- Store cleaning fluids indoors so leaks and spills can't reach storm drains.

### Grease

- Always use grease bins to dispose of oils and greases.
- Minimize spills when transferring oil and grease to grease bins by using containers of adequate size that are equipped with spouts.
- Clean up spills as soon as possible using dry absorbents such as cat litter.
- Maintain grease traps to prevent overflows. Hire a professional service for proper grease hauling and disposal.

### Dumpster Management

- Never dispose of liquids in a Dumpster. Keep the Dumpster drain closed and inspect it for leaks on a regular basis.
- Keep the Dumpster lid locked (if possible) to keep out rain and scavengers.
- When the Dumpster needs cleaning, call your waste hauler for cleaning or replacement.
- Use garbage bags to contain the waste, then throw the bags into the Dumpster. Do not throw loose waste into a Dumpster.



### Storm Drains vs. the Sanitary Sewer

Storm drains and sanitary sewers have two distinct functions. It is important to understand the difference.

**Storm drains** are intended to collect and transport runoff from rainfall. Storm drain systems do not remove pollutants from water before it is discharged into streams and rivers. Generally, these are the drains found in streets and in parking lots.

**Sanitary sewers** collect wastewater from indoor plumbing such as toilets, sinks, washing machines and floor drains. The wastewater flows to a sewage treatment plant. The treatment plant removes pollutants from wastewater before it is discharged to the receiving stream.