

## Before You Clean

Before performing carpet cleaning operations, here are some BMPs to follow to insure that you are protecting our waterways:

**1. Become a BASMAA certified mobile cleaner:**

Acquire the online training from the Bay Area Stormwater Management Agencies Association (BASMAA) for mobile surface cleaning. This program will train you on how to clean different surface areas in an environmentally acceptable way.

To become a BASMAA certified mobile surface cleaner go to: [www.basmaa.org](http://www.basmaa.org).

**2. Acquire a Wastewater Permit:** Contact the local sanitary district and acquire any required permits to discharge your wash water. Also, obtain permission to discharge to the property owner's sanitary sewer plumbing.

**3. Dry Cleanup first:** Vacuum debris off carpets before cleaning the carpeted area to reduce the material in wash water.

**4. Collect Wash Water:** Clean the carpet with little or no soap and collect the wash water to dispose down the sanitary sewer system, if permitted to do so.

## WASH WATER DISPOSAL PRACTICES FOR CARPET CLEANERS

## Questions?

If you have questions about the proper BMPs for surface cleaning, or if you have questions about illicit dumping and stormwater pollution, please contact the Contra Costa Clean Water Program at:

**1-800-NO-DUMPING**  
(1-800-663-8674)

or go to

[www.cccleanwater.org](http://www.cccleanwater.org)




**Water is life.  
Rescue it.**

255 Glacier Drive, Martinez, CA 94553-4897  
p. 925.313.2360 f. 925.313.2301



**Water is life.  
Rescue it.**

 Printed on recycled paper  
30% post consumer content

## WASH WATER DISPOSAL PRACTICES FOR CARPET CLEANERS



*Specialist using a professional vacuum system.*

### It is illegal to allow anything other than rain water to be discharged to a storm drain.

Wash water should never be discharged to a street, gutter, parking lot, or storm drain. If discharged or disposed of improperly, materials such as solvents, dirt, and soapy water can degrade water quality and creek habitats. Individuals who improperly handle and dispose of non-stormwater materials down the storm drain are subject to civil and criminal prosecution.

### How are the Storm Drain and Sanitary Sewer Systems Different?

Throughout urban communities, the storm drain system transports rainwater to local creeks, the bay, the delta, and to the ocean. This system was created to prevent flooding within communities and homes. All water and materials that enter the storm drain

system is **untreated**. The sanitary sewer is a plumbed system that transports used water from buildings to a wastewater collection and treatment facility, where the water and sewage is treated before being released back into the environment.

If you see an outdoor drain and are unsure of its use, assume it is a storm drain and do not discharge wash water to it.

### Where Can You Dispose of Wash Water?

All carpet cleaners who conduct cleaning operations, which generate wash water must perform cleaning operations based on established best management practices (BMPs). With permission from the sanitary district and the property owner, wash water from



*A professional vacuum system collecting wash water.*

carpet cleaners can be discharged into a:

1. Floor, Utility or Mop Sink
2. Toilet
3. Drain connected to the sanitary sewer system

► *Carpet cleaners need to contact the local sanitary district to procure a discharge permit if required before discharging their wash water to the sanitary sewer system.*

All wash water discharged to a sanitary system must:

1. Meet the discharge requirements of the local sanitary sewer district (certain cleaning products, such as spot removers, may contain toxic organic compounds and should be used very sparingly.)
2. Not contain hazardous materials

► *Cleaning products labeled “nontoxic” and “biodegradable” can still harm wildlife if they enter the storm drain system. These products are prohibited discharges to the storm drain system.*



*Specialist using a vacuum system to collect wastewater.*