



Stormwater Management *Fact Sheet*

Dumpsters and Stormwater Pollution Prevention

Dumpsters are used and operated by commercial, construction, and industrial facilities throughout Cobb County as a convenient and useful method of waste disposal. Compactors and garbage, roll-off, used oil containment, and cooking grease dumpsters are commonly used for all types of waste disposal [e.g. trash, food waste, hazardous substances, construction debris, cooking grease, and used petroleum, oil, and lubricants (POLs)]. Leachate, trash, and debris from the dumpsters flow untreated to our stormwater drainage system and directly to our local creeks, rivers, ponds, and lakes. These pollutants have the potential to destroy sensitive ecosystems, harm aquatic life and habitats, and pollute recreational sites and the drinking water supplies in Cobb County and the surrounding communities. Cobb County Code prohibits the discharge of these contaminants to the stormwater system.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are proactive, practical, easily implemented, and affordable techniques that reduce stormwater pollution; protect and improve water quality; save money on disposal costs; comply with Cobb County Code to reduce liabilities and penalties; and offer an environmentally friendly alternative and service to the facility owner and business customers. The following BMPs must be implemented to ensure your facility does not violate County Code and that you do not contaminate the stormwater drainage system.



Keep sliding doors and top lids closed except when filling or emptying the dumpster/compactor. This will prevent stormwater from entering the container and filtering through the waste, picking up contaminants that leach from the container into the stormwater drainage system. Open lids and doors invite pests to enter and/or spread trash around the surrounding area. Roll-off dumpsters utilized for long term practices such as construction activities, remodeling, or clean-up operations must be covered except when filling or emptying.

Keep the surrounding areas free of trash, spilled substances, and debris. Monitor the outside areas of the facility on a daily basis, dispose of all waste properly, and ensure spills are cleaned up using dry methods. Consider using a locking dumpster to help prevent illegal dumping.



Do not place dumpsters near or on storm drains. Place dumpsters in covered areas that connect directly into the sanitary sewer system or in areas away from the stormwater drainage system. It is recommended that all storm drains be marked to prevent accidental dumping. Contact the Stormwater Environmental Compliance Section at the numbers below to receive information on storm drain markers.

To learn more about stormwater issues in Cobb County, please call 770-419-6432/6441 or visit www.stormwater.cobbcountyga.gov.

This is an official publication of the Cobb County Water System, an agency of the Cobb County Board of Commissioners.



Ensure the size of the dumpster is appropriate for the disposal needs of your business. Do not allow trash and debris to overflow from the container and keep the lids/doors from closing. Do not place trash outside the dumpster or compactor.

Securely bag all waste material before putting it in the dumpster/compactor. Un-bagged waste, especially food waste, is a stormwater pollutant and a health and safety hazard to the facility and the surrounding community.



Do not put liquids or cooking greases in the garbage dumpster. Cooking greases must be disposed of in cooking grease traps or grease dumpsters/drums. Ensure cooking grease dumpsters and drums are labeled and lids are kept closed except when filling or emptying. Hazardous substances must be disposed of properly, not into the storm or sanitary sewer systems.

Inspect the dumpsters and compactors to ensure there are no holes, rust, or liquids leaking from them on a daily basis. Dumpsters and compactors must be leak-free. If necessary, notify the sanitation company/owner to replace or clean the container. Cobb County Code prohibits the discharge of wash/mop water from clean-up operations into the stormwater drainage system. Ensure that compactor motors are not leaking POLs onto the ground and into the stormwater drainage system.



Ensure the drain plug for the container is in place. The sanitation company/owner must replace the plug immediately to ensure liquids from the dumpster do not leak out and enter the stormwater drainage system.

All employees must be trained on stormwater pollution prevention to include good housekeeping practices and waste disposal. For assistance in training and getting information for owners, haulers, and employees, contact the Stormwater Environmental Compliance Section at the contact numbers provided.

Failure to follow the proper dumpster BMPs is a violation of the following Cobb County codes:

Cobb County Code Section 50-191a Prohibited Discharges states that "It is unlawful for any person to throw, drain, run, or otherwise discharge to any component of the county separate storm drainage system or to cause, permit or suffer to be thrown, drained, run or allow to seep or otherwise discharge into such system any matter of any nature excepting only such stormwater or surface water as authorized in this article. Prohibitions of this section shall include all trash of any sort, household products, furniture, toys, yard clippings, shrubbery, trees, limbs, etc.

Cobb County Code Section 102-92a Littering Public or Private Property or Waters states that "It shall be unlawful for any person or persons to dump, throw, or leave litter on any public or private property in the unincorporated areas".

Food waste and cooking grease dumped on the ground or in a garbage dumpster without being properly secured can also be a violation of Cobb and Douglas Health Department regulations.

Reminder: The Hours of Collection Ordinance 102-71(a)(1) states that "No Person or entity shall engage in the collection, transportation or disposal of any solid waste, or recyclables from dumpsters, containers or receptacles of any kind or type between the hours of 11:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. except to perform emergency work required to safeguard the immediate health, safety, and welfare of the public."