



Storing Materials and Wastes

Why be concerned?

If materials and wastes aren't properly stored, pollutants can leak from stockpiles and containers and run onto the ground. From there, pollutants can filter through to the ground water table or be washed by rainwater into a lake, river or stream. Reduce risk to the environment by *reducing* the amount of materials and wastes kept in storage, whenever possible.



Choosing Safe Storage Containers

- Make sure that storage containers are in good condition and lined with a material that won't deteriorate. Outdoor storage containers should be water-tight, rodent-proof and protected from tampering.
- Keep products in their original containers, if possible. Otherwise, clearly label containers and cover the labels with transparent tape to keep them from falling off or weathering.
- Never mix different types of materials or wastes in a single container. This can create excess hazardous waste, prevent recycling and greatly increase disposal costs.

Managing Trash

Trash containers are a common source of pollutants, especially when they contain damp or oily wastes. (Liquids should *not* be put into a trash container). Place dumpsters on concrete surfaces and keep their lids tightly closed to keep the rain out. If possible, build a cover over trash containers.

Assign someone to regularly clean up the ground around trash containers. If a container leaks, repair or replace it immediately to avoid polluting.

Indoor Storage - the Weatherproof Option

Potential pollutants should be stored indoors, unless doing so will increase risks to health and safety. Indoor storage is preferred because it prevents containers from weathering, keeps precipitation out and prevents spills from infiltrating into the ground.

Indoor storage of certain materials, such as flammable liquids, may affect your fire insurance rating. Consult your insurance carrier regarding questions about storing a material indoors.

If materials must be stored outside, construct a covered, paved area designed to contain leaks and spills. If it's impossible to cover and pave outdoor storage areas, place each primary container within a larger, leak-proof receptacle.

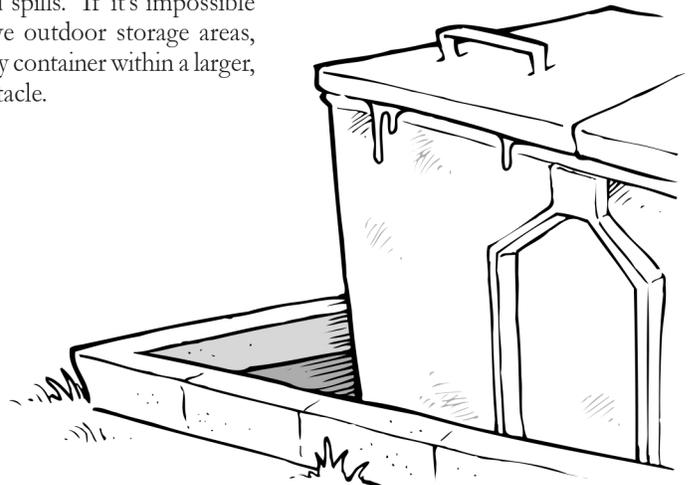
Designing Storage Areas to Contain Leaks and Spills

Converting an existing room into a secondary containment area is a logical, low-cost approach to safe storage. Prevent runoff from entering or leaving the area by making sure that cracks in floors and corners are completely sealed and that door sills are high enough to contain spills.

If the containment area is located within a larger room or outdoors, construct an impermeable berm around it. Since liquids escaping from punctures must also be contained, make sure that the area is designed (and that containers are placed) in a way that will prevent any escaping liquids from leaving the area.

Design storage areas to completely contain at least 110% of the largest container's total volume. 110% is required by law if you're storing hazardous materials. 150% is required if you're storing materials that are petroleum-based.

*See the reverse side for information about properly **draining** storage areas.*



**DANGEROUS DRAINAGE:
Storage Areas and the
Storm Sewer System**

Never allow storage areas to drain to any part of the stormwater management system. If you aren't sure where a drain leads, call Cobb County Stormwater Management, Water Quality Section for assistance.

If possible, connect drains to a dead-end holding tank - especially if you're storing hazardous or petroleum products. If a spill occurs, the tank's contents will need to be pumped out and disposed of by a licensed waste hauler. Although holding tanks incur the cost of pumpouts, they avoid the risk of environmental cleanups costing thousands of dollars.

Equip floor drains with shut-off valves in case of a spill. Inspect these valves regularly to ensure proper operation.

Unused Materials

Regularly inspect storage and other areas to make sure that unused materials don't accumulate. Identify and properly dispose of unusable materials, including those abandoned by previous property owners. (If hazardous materials have been abandoned on-site, the original owner or generator is still legally responsible for their disposal.) For more information about waste disposal, see **Series #7 (Fact Sheets 7.2 and 7.3)**.

Managing Stockpiles

If possible, build a permanent, covered area for stockpiles. Alternatively, place stockpiles on a paved surface and keep them covered with plastic sheeting when not in use. Secure the sheeting with weighted tires or sandbags. Move temporary stockpiles to a permanent storage place as soon as possible.

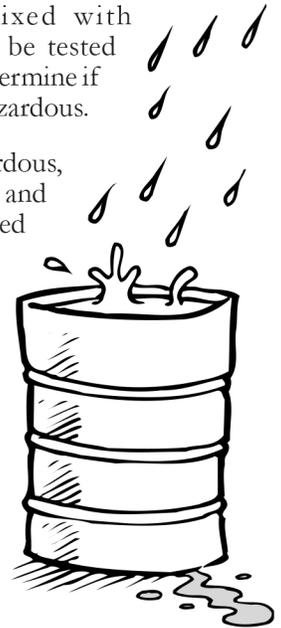
Assign someone to periodically sweep the area around stockpiles to prevent any materials that escape from washing away with stormwater. If necessary, construct a berm around stockpiles to prevent stormwater from running through them.

**The Perils of
Uncovered Storage**

If it's not possible to cover outside storage areas, rainwater can accumulate. Leaks or spills of chemical or petroleum substances could then be mixed with rainwater, and must be tested before disposal to determine if they have become hazardous.

- If rainwater **is** hazardous, have it pumped out and disposed of by a licensed waste hauler.

- If rainwater is **not** hazardous, discharge it to the sanitary sewer, with prior approval from Cobb County Office of Environmental Compliance. Alternatively, reuse it on your site in an appropriate manner, for example as equipment wash water.



Since automatic sump pumps continuously discharge any hazardous substances that have leaked and become mixed in with rainwater, use a manual sump pump or water vacuum instead. These allow for visual inspection of rainwater before disposal. If flammable materials are being stored, contact your local fire department before installing a manual sump pump.



Regulatory Requirements for Storage and Containment

Make sure that all storage practices conform to federal, state and local requirements, and that all necessary permits have been obtained. Agencies to contact for more information include the Cobb County Fire Marshall, Georgia Pollution Prevention Assistance Division, Cobb County Stormwater Management, and your local building and fire departments.

GETTING HELP

Cobb County Office of Environmental Compliance(770) 528-3340

Cobb County Stormwater Management.....(770) 419-6435
Water Quality Section.....(770) 419-6441

Cobb County Fire Marshall.....(770) 528-7000

Community Partners for Healthy Streams(770) 419-6303