

Managing Stormwater in Allenstown

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Stormwater, or runoff, is the water that flows as a result of rain or snowmelt. Stormwater travels across pavement and other surfaces collecting sediment, chemicals, and pollutants, including but not limited to motor oil, gasoline, lawn chemicals, pet waste, and deicing chemicals. It can carry these harmful pollutants directly into waterways, contaminating water used for drinking, recreation, and for local wildlife.

Residents of Allenstown enjoy the benefits of the town's location along the Merrimack and Suncook Rivers and it is of the utmost importance to maintain the quality of these waters to the highest standards. There are many steps that the town and residents can take to protect waterways and drinking water. This flyer is just one in a series about how residents and business owners can do their part. Read on to learn more.

Managing Dumpsters for Water Quality

Many of the most common sources of pollution at industrial facilities comes from littering, or improper collection and disposal of waste. Taking the trash out can be a passive process without much thought. However, it is important to be conscious and safe with trash. Both solid and liquid waste have the potential to contaminate stormwater and enter local waterbodies effecting wildlife, vegetation, and drinking or recreational water sources. The following practices help ensure that your dumpsters are best suited for limiting dangerous stormwater runoff:

Keep Dumpsters Closed

Ensure that **BOTH** the sliding doors and the top lids are closed except for when filling or emptying. This prevents stormwater from entering the container and filtering through the waste. Also, open lids or doors invite pests that can spread trash.

Keep Surrounding Area Clear

When disposing of trash make sure the area around the dumpster is clear. There should be no trash, spilled substances, or debris present outside the unit. Monitor the outside area frequently.

Choose the Right Dumpster

The size of your dumpster must be appropriate for the disposal needs of your facility. Trash and debris should never overflow from the container. If the lid cannot be closed or trash is being placed outside the dumpster a second or larger unit is required.

Bag All Trash

All trash and debris should be secured in bags before placing in a dumpster. Un-bagged waste is much more likely to contaminate stormwater and pollute the environment. Bagging waste also promotes a safer disposal for sanitation companies .

Transport Trash Safely

Make sure waste is not leaking before bringing it to the dumpster. If necessary double bag and make sure the trash is secured. Double checking the trash before transporting will highly decrease the probability of spills that could be harmful to the environment.

Perform Routine Inspections

Frequently and routinely inspect all dumpsters for holes, rust, or any areas that could potentially leak. Dumpsters must be entirely contained with no leaks. If any damage is spotted instantly notify the sanitation company or dumpster owner to replace or fix the unit.

Arrange Regular Pickup and Disposal Schedule

Plan for dumpster waste to be disposed regularly on standardized intervals. This allows for your facility to develop a trash disposal schedule that does not lead to dumpsters being overfilled. Plan for pickup to occur before the dumpster is usually completely full, to account for times when trash levels may exceed their normal amounts.

Be Mindful of What is Thrown Out

Hazardous materials, liquids, or liquid-containing wastes should never be put in dumpsters. Dumpsters are not designed for these substances resulting in the liquids likely becoming harmful runoff.

Clean Spills Promptly and Properly

In the event of a spill, safely clean up the area. Any liquid leaks or spills should be cleaned with dry cleanup methods. Simply spraying a liquid spill will likely result in harmful run off.

Location is Key

Properly situating a dumpster is key in mitigating any potential of harmful run off effects. The following are the main characteristics to consider when placing your unit:

Storm Drains: Never place a dumpster near or on a storm drain. Close proximity gives any potential contaminated runoff a direct route to the stormwater system. It is advantageous to mark all storm drains that are close by to prevent any accidental dumping.

Coverage: Most ideally dumpsters should be placed under cover. Protection from the rain helps further prevent stormwater seeping into the trash and contaminating run off.

Proximity: Cut down on transportation time and chance of spills by keeping the dumpster conveniently located and close to your facilities.

Ground Surface: Locate dumpsters on a flat and paved surface. Install berms or curbs around the storage area to prevent run on and run off.



Photo of Dumpster Near Storm Drain: State of Georgia



Photo of Unsafe Dumpster: State of Georgia

Additional Resources:

UNH Facilities SWMP—https://www.unh.edu/sites/default/files/departments/facilities/swmp-unh-2020_update.pdf

Think Blue Suncook—<http://thinkbluesuncook.org>

Town of Allentown, New Hampshire—<https://www.allentownnh.gov>

