



Stormwater Pollutant Factsheet

Total Suspended Solids

Total suspended solids (TSS) describe particles of a variety of materials that are carried by stormwater into waterways. These particles often contain pollutants such as phosphorous, pesticides and heavy metals that are harmful to aquatic life. Suspended solids are harmful to fish while they are carried in the water column and they can also settle into sediments and degrade fish habitat.

Potential Sources of TSS

- ◆ Erosion during and following construction activities or in areas without vegetated groundcover
- ◆ Vehicle tracking of mud and dirt from on- and off-site sources
- ◆ Landscaping installation and maintenance
- ◆ Washing vehicles, equipment, or paved surfaces
- ◆ Storing and handling bulk materials
- ◆ Building maintenance (particularly washing roofs)
- ◆ Agricultural activities or handling agricultural products

Best Management Practices

- ◆ Isolate bulk materials from stormwater run-on by using berms or other features.
- ◆ Cover material handling areas to prevent discharge into the storm system.
- ◆ In bulk material handling areas where pollutants could be generated and cannot be covered, use infiltration or discharge to the sanitary system.
- ◆ Perform regular maintenance on stormwater management facilities to ensure proper function.
- ◆ Perform regular street sweeping with equipment that uses regenerative air. This may also reduce the frequency of maintenance needed for stormwater management facilities and improve facility aesthetics.

- ◆ Use standard erosion prevention techniques for any soil disturbance.
- ◆ Use a sweeping service when vehicle tracking occurs despite proper erosion control measures.
- ◆ Create an Erosion and Sediment Pollution Control Plan before construction activities begin.
- ◆ Vegetate areas of exposed soils with groundcovers such as grass.
- ◆ Use products, such as filters, for inlet or catch basin protection.

Additional Resources

[*Cleaning with Steam: Port of Seattle demonstration*](#), Washington Stormwater Center

[*Erosion and Sediment Control Manual*](#), City of Portland

[*Stormwater and the Construction Industry*](#), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

[*Developing Your Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan: A Guide for Construction Sites*](#), U.S. Environmental Protection Agency