

PROGRAM FOR FIRE FIGHTING AND FIRE SYSTEM FLOWS

Emergency fire fighting flows (i.e., flows necessary for the protection of life or property) do not require BMPs and need not be prohibited. However, as part of the MS4 Storm Water Permit update, the Sonoma County Fire Chief's Association (SCFCA) is developing a program to reduce pollutants from non-emergency fire fighting flows, fire system testing and maintenance, vehicle and equipment maintenance as well as for emergency discharges (as time and resources allow).

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

In consideration of BMPs associated with non-emergency fire fighting activities, the SCFCA has identified a number of potential discharge sources including maintenance of fire and emergency vehicles and equipment, training exercises, fire systems and facility maintenance. It is important to recognize, and make provision for the post emergency rehabilitation of response equipment including tools, fire hoses, ladders, and other equipment utilized at the scene of an emergency, as this equipment must be restored to a response-ready state in a manner that does not delay the ability of the apparatus to be available for subsequent response actions. As such, the use of water that could contribute to storm water discharges may be used unless another practical and immediately available method is identified, and will be performed in a manner that minimizes discharges to the storm drain. In consideration of the non-emergency activities listed above, the SCFCA has identified the following BMPs to address discharge generated from such activities:

NON-STORM WATER DISCHARGES

- EMERGENCY DISCHARGE – FIREFIGHTING, UNAUTHORIZED HYDRANT OPENINGS, NATURAL OR MAN-MADE DISASTERS (E.G. EARTHQUAKES, FLOODS, WILDFIRES, ACCIDENTS, TERRORIST ACTIONS)
 - If time and resources allow, plug the storm drain collection system for temporary storage and proper disposal of runoff
 - If time and resources allow, dam, dyke or berm runoff from fires at industrial facilities or where hazardous materials are involved in the firefighting activities. Request Hazardous Materials Response Teams if necessary for mitigation, monitoring, damming, dyking, and testing equipment
 - Report any hazardous materials entering the storm drain system by getting a CalEMA # (OES#) 800-852-7550. Proper agencies will be notified
 - When putting equipment back into service do not drain any foam in an area that may enter the storm drain, direct foam to landscaped areas
- FIRE TRAINING
 - Whenever possible, practice drills are to be performed in areas where runoff will be contained
 - When practice drills must be performed in an area where runoff could potentially leave the site, the site shall be surveyed by the officer-in-charge prior to training

activities to ensure that debris will not enter the storm drain system as a result of the drill

- As determined feasible, runoff from training drills or other non-emergency activities, will be directed to landscaped areas
- Areas that have debris that could potentially enter the storm drain system as a result of the drill activities will not be used for training until the debris has been removed

➤ LIVE FIRE TRAINING

- Live fire training activities will be pre-planned to allow integration of structural BMP barriers to control runoff as deemed necessary
- Runoff from live fire training activities will be dechlorinated by containment, aeration, volatilization, or with dechlorination tablets used by trained personnel before discharge to the storm drain system

➤ FIRE SYSTEMS

- Contain flows onsite and/or direct the water flows to landscaped or green areas whenever possible and safe to do so without causing damage or erosion
- Divert sprinkler system flows to the sewer, when practicable and with the permission of the local sewer agency
- Runoff from fire system testing and maintenance activities will be dechlorinated by containment, aeration, volatilization, or with dechlorination tablets used by trained personnel before discharge to the storm drain system
- Discharge from dry chemical suppression systems must be disposed of properly

➤ VEHICLE WASHING & REPAIR

- Wash vehicles at a specifically designated wash area that drains to the sanitary sewer or take vehicles to a commercial, city or county wash rack.
- If a wash rack connected to a sanitary sewer system is not available, runoff from vehicle and equipment washing activities shall be directed onto landscaped, graveled or green areas whenever possible and safe to do so without causing damage or erosion
- Perform maintenance or repair work inside. Only emergency repairs and maintenance activities that do not involve fluids may be performed outdoors
- Do not store leaking vehicles or equipment outdoors. Contain leak (drip pans), repair immediately or move indoors and repair
- Good housekeeping and dry cleanup practices will be utilized as part of standard facility maintenance procedures

➤ EDUCATION OF PERSONNEL

- Train employees on these BMPs, storm water discharge prohibitions, and wastewater discharge requirements
- Establish a regular training schedule, train all new employees, and conduct annual refresher training
- Use a training log or similar method to document training