



Stormwater drain markers remind us that we are all connected to our surrounding environment.



# Painting & Decorating

Protect Our Aquatic Environment by Preventing Stormwater Contamination

## Spill Prevention

Spills of paint or solvents must be cleaned up immediately. They should be contained to prevent products from entering the stormwater drainage system. When paint washings enter the stormwater drainage system or environment, the colour dyes remain visible and can be easily traced back to the source. Solvents and paint thinners are flammable and can create explosive conditions in our sewers and must not be allowed to enter any sewers or plumbing fixtures at any time.

In the event of an accidental spill to the environment immediately contact the **Provincial Emergency Program (PEP)** at **1.800.663.3456**. In the event that the chemical is flammable, toxic, corrosive or has other hazardous properties call the **Surrey Fire Department** immediately at **911**.

Any person responsible for stormwater drainage system contamination may be held liable under the following environmental legislation:

- Federal Fisheries Act
- BC Hazardous Waste Regulation
- BC Environmental Management Act
- Surrey By-law No. 16610

## For more information

RCBC Recycling Hotline  
**604.732.9253**

Product Care Association  
**604.592.2972**  
[www.productcare.org](http://www.productcare.org)

City of Surrey  
Drainage & Environment Section  
**604.591.4321**

Surrey Fire Department  
**604.543.6760**

BC Ministry of Environment  
**604.582.5200**

If you witness a spill or chemicals being washed into a stormwater drain, please contact the City of Surrey's Engineering Department at **604.590.7226**, after 4:30pm at **604.591.4431**.



## Painting

Painting and decorating operations use products that create wastes which can be harmful to the environment. Wastes from paints, thinners, adhesives, and paint removers can contain hazardous chemicals and flammable, corrosive or toxic waste, all of which are harmful to fish and the aquatic environment. When these products or wash water from the equipment used to apply these products are poured into ditches, street, parking lot, or other stormwater drainages, they enter the stormwater drainage system.

In Surrey, the stormwater drainage system discharges, untreated, into local creeks and streams. There are over 1500 km of open creeks and streams in Surrey. These creeks and streams form an important network of watercourses, which provide natural habitat for salmon, trout, and other aquatic life.



## DID YOU KNOW

### **You can reuse solvents and thinners:**

Set used thinner or solvent aside in a closed jar to settle out paint particles. Drain off the clear liquid which you can then reuse. Allow the solids to harden and place them in the garbage.

Latex paint that is not suitable for re-use is used as a raw material in manufacturing concrete products. Unusable oil-based paint is either re-distilled for its solvent content or is used for its energy potential as an alternative fuel.

## Best Management Practices

To prevent contaminants from entering the stormwater drainage system and ultimately our streams and creeks, please observe the following practices:

- Prevent wastewater from high pressure water stripping or cleaning of building exteriors from entering the stormwater drainage system.
- Collect all wash water, solutions, and solvents used to clean equipment and reuse, recycle, or dispose of properly. Contact a disposal company that will dispose or recycle products properly.
- Use water based paints whenever possible. Look for the words "latex" or "clean up with water" on the label. These paints are less toxic than oil-based and do not require solvent for clean-up.
- Leftover paint must be prevented from entering any stormwater drain or sewer and it can not be placed in the garbage. Use leftover paints on the next job, give it to a charity for their use or contact the Product Care Association or the RCBC Recycling Hotline for the nearest paint collection depot.
- Chemical or mechanical paint stripping residue, paints, paint chips and paint dusts containing lead, mercury, tributyl tin or other hazardous or leachable compounds may be considered "special wastes" under the Environmental Management Act and may require special disposal. Contact the BC Ministry of Environment for disposal requirements.
- Never clean brushes or rinse paint containers into the street, gutter or stormwater drain.
- For water-based paints, paint out brushes to the fullest extent possible and rinse in a location that is connected to the sanitary sewer.
- For oil-based paints, paint out brushes to the fullest extent possible, filter and reuse thinners and solvents. Dispose of excess liquids and residues as hazardous wastes.
- Ensure all employees are aware of their important role in preventing stormwater drain contamination.