

Outdoor storage of used cooking oil

Many businesses utilize outdoor storage containers to temporarily store food waste, recycling, landfill waste, used cooking oil, and other waste products. Improper use and maintenance of these waste and recycling storage areas can result in pollutants entering our stormwater system.

Protecting our rivers

Stormwater is water from wet weather (rain events or melting snow) that enters outdoor storm drains and travels through an underground pipe system to our rivers.

Stormwater enters the Bow and Elbow rivers without going through a treatment plant, so it is important that the water entering storm drains is clean.

Poorly managed outdoor waste storage areas and improper handling of used cooking oil can increase the risk of stormwater pollution.

Best practices for managing outdoor storage of used oil are outlined here to help your business comply with regulatory requirements, prevent stormwater pollution, and help protect the environment.

Issues to avoid

- Overflowing used oil bins caused by rain and snow when lids are left open
- Overflowing used oil bins when not emptied frequently enough
- Leaks and spills from containers during transport and disposal
- Excessive oil stains from small spills over time
- Liquid waste and leaky trash bags
- Illicit dumping of used oil into storm drains
- Buildup of grime and sediment in waste storage areas



Photo 1: This collection bin is an example of poor outdoor used oil storage. It does not have a lid and is prone to illicit dumping or overflowing during wet weather.

Fines for Non-Compliance

Under The City of Calgary's Stormwater Bylaw 37M2005, cooking oils and grease are listed as prohibited materials.

The release of prohibited materials into storm drains, even unintentionally, could result in penalties for your business.

4(1) No Person shall Release, or allow to be Released, any Prohibited Material into the Stormwater System.

Specified Penalty: \$3000

Managing outdoor storage of used cooking oil

Place storage containers on a flat, solid surface away from storm drains (preferably near the building exit) to reduce the distance waste is transported and to reduce the risk of spills.

- Ensure containers have secure lids at all times
- Position containers under shelter to protect from wet weather
- Avoid placing used oil containers on permeable surfaces (i.e. grass, gravel)
- Lock containers to prevent illegal dumping
- Use secondary containment to catch spills and leaks
 - Install your bin within a metal or plywood box
 - Keep spill cleanup material at your back door to address small spills
- Inspect waste storage containers regularly for leaks or damage
- Transport cooking oil to waste receptacles in smaller containers to reduce the risk of spills
- Have your used oil containers emptied regularly by a service provider specializing in used cooking oil recycling. You can find a waste hauler by visiting calgary.ca/knowbeforeyouthrow



Do not dispose of grease interceptor waste in used cooking oil bins.

Waste from grease interceptors contaminates the recycling process for the used oil collection companies.

Keep storage areas clean

Sweep outdoor storage areas, walkways, and shared areas regularly to reduce the amount of litter and sediment entering storm drains.

- Have a spill kit available.
 - Clean spills immediately using dry methods such as absorbent spill pads or granular absorbents (e.g. kitty litter).
 - Dispose of all cleaned up waste materials as landfill waste
- Use dry cleanup methods only
 - Do not wash contaminated waste storage areas with water
 - Hire a professional cleaning service that specializes in outdoor waste storage areas



Photo 2: This collection bin is an example of proper outdoor used oil storage. The bin has been placed on a flat, impervious surface. It has a lid, and the storage area is reasonably clean and free of debris.

Visit calgary.ca/stmpp for more tips to reduce stormwater pollution at your facility. If used oil is spilled outside, it should be cleaned up immediately. If the spill is absorbed into the ground or enters the stormwater system, it must be reported to Alberta Environment and Parks (AEP) and The City of Calgary via 311.