Pollution Prevention

Alachua County

Best Management Practices for Controlling Runoff from Gas Stations

Alachua County Water Quality Code (Ordinance 02-27) prohibits non-stormwater discharges into storm water management systems.

The Storm Drain System was built to collect and transport rain to prevent flooding in urban areas. Anything that flows or is discharged into the storm drain system goes directly into local creeks without any treatment.

The Sanitary Sewer System collects and transports sanitary wastes from interior building plumbing systems to a wastewater treatment plant where the wastewater is treated.

Best Management Practices (BMPs) are methods and practices such as good housekeeping, spill prevention, or treatment measures to prevent or minimize pollutant discharges.

Illegal Discharges or Illicit Connections discharge non-storm water to municipal storm drain systems and contribute to water pollution.

Urban Runoff is rain and any other water that passes through and out of developed areas into the storm drain system and eventually to creeks and other waters.

This Fact Sheet provides background information and Best Management Practices for gas station facilities. Incidental spills from vehicular fueling, when improperly managed, can result in high loads of pollutants to our local water bodies and may result in violations of the Water Quality Code. Storm water runoff from gas stations can be a mixture of gasoline, diesel, antifreeze and other automotive fluids accumulated at the site. Following the BMPs on the back of this sheet will help you be in compliance with the Water Quality Code and will make a significant impact on improving water quality in Alachua County.

Small spills from vehicle fueling can allow pollutants to enter our creeks and lakes when rainfall washes these materials into the storm drain system.

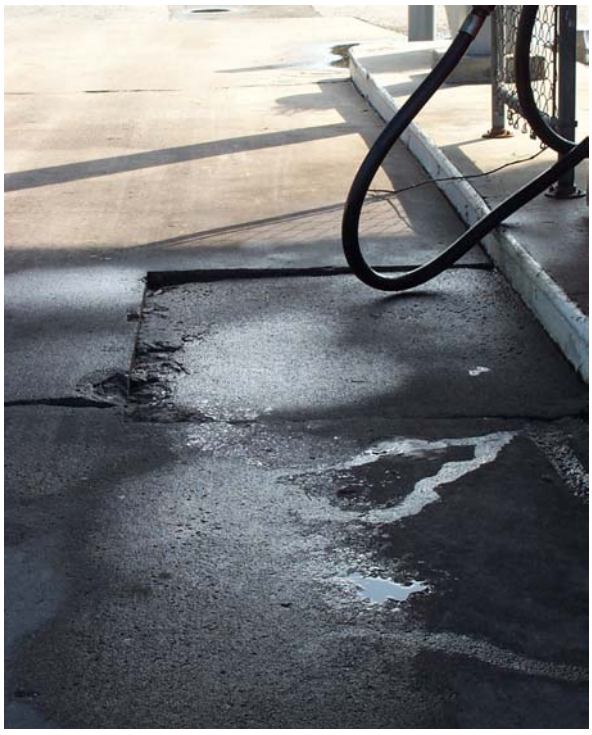
Best Management Practices

Controlling possible contamination at its source is the best way to prevent pollutants from ever reaching the storm water system. Here are some ways to accomplish this:

- Maintain fuel dispensing areas using dry cleanup methods such as sweeping for removal of litter and debris, or use of rags and absorbents for leaks and spills.
- Check dispenser hoses frequently, train employees on spill prevention, and proper inspection of pumps.
- Provide spill kits.
- Provide an emergency shut-off button in plain view with bold red letters.
- Provide a roof over the area where refueling is done to prevent storm water intrusion.
- Construct containment system to keep rainwater out of the fueling area. Small speed bumps usually are enough.
- Do not allow patrons to change oil, antifreeze or conduct automotive repairs on the property.
- Supervise refueling operations to make sure no spills occur, but if they do, that fuel is drained from the sump and all absorbent materials are disposed of properly.

Other Best Management Practices that can be implemented involve retro fitting of storm drains with filtration devices, screens, or centrifuges to reduce pollutant loadings before discharge.

Proper cleanup of incidential spills at gas stations is essential to reducing the load of pollutants that enters our creeks and lakes. Many of these pollutants entering our water bodies adsorb onto sediments degrading benthic habitat as well as water quality in aquatic ecosystems.



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