

Alachua County Water Quality Code

Chapter 77 (Ordinance 02-27)
prohibits non-storm water discharges into
storm water management systems,
which includes most roads.

The Storm Drain System

was built to collect and transport rain to
prevent flooding in urban areas. In most areas,
anything that flows or is discharged into the
storm drain system goes directly into local
creeks without any treatment.



**Discharge of waste water from home
improvement projects to the storm water
collection system (including many roads)
is prohibited because it contains
pollutants.**

Even cleaners labeled “biodegradable” and
“non-toxic” may be harmful to aquatic life,
especially after cleaning various surfaces
(e.g. dumpster areas or equipment) that contain
oils, greases, chemicals, and other substances.
Any substance, including pressure washing
waste water that enters storm drains may flow
directly into lakes and creeks. This water is not
treated and can harm fish and wildlife and
contaminate recreational sites and drinking
water supplies.

Resources

Alachua County Environmental Protection Department
www.AlachuaCountyWater.org

Gainesville Clean Water Partnership
www.GainesvilleCreeks.org

Alachua County Household Hazardous Waste
Collection Center
www.AlachuaCountyHazWaste.org



BMP

for Painting and Home Improvement Projects

In this guide:

- How to choose environmentally friendly paint and cleaning chemicals.
- How to safely dispose of unwanted paint and cleaning chemicals.
- How to implement Best Management Practices (BMPs) to prevent water pollution in Alachua County.

Proper Storage and Disposal

It is illegal to dump any hazardous materials into storm drains, sinks, toilets, the trash, or on the ground. Penalties for improper disposal include fines and responsibility for clean-up costs.

Excess paint and chemicals may be taken to an Alachua County Rural Collection Center or the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center. The Center can provide guidance for any hazardous waste disposal questions:

(352) 334-0440

www.AlachuaCountyHazWaste.org

Reduce Waste

- Scrape containers with a rubber spatula to remove the most paint possible. You can salvage up to 9% of your paint this way.
- Keep latex and oil based paints separate. Mixing these paints together makes recycling impossible.
- Consider using or buying recycled paints. You may be able to get free painting products from the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center.
- Reuse thinners and solvents by filtering out particles with reusable wire screen or by allowing particles to settle out.
- Cover and seal materials tightly to avoid contamination, reduce evaporation, and increase product life.

- Oil based paint, thinners, stains, sealants, solvents, epoxies, and sludges must be disposed of as hazardous waste.
- For small amounts of leftover materials, consider applying an additional coat or combining paint for use as a primer.
- For larger leftover amounts, arrange for the distributor or manufacturer to take back unused or unopened paints, or donate paint to schools, theaters, churches, or the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center.
- Store all painting related products and wastes in a covered area away from floor drains and storm drains. Keep absorbent pads on hand to catch any spilled material.
- Secure containers in vehicles to avoid spills.
- When outdoors, always use tarps and drop cloths to prevent drift and spills.

Lead-based Paint

Lead-based paint was commonly used in residential housing until 1978. Inhaling or ingesting microscopic lead particles can cause serious neurological damage. Children are especially susceptible to the effects. Professionals are available to remove, replace, or cover lead-based paint.

For more information, visit the EPA Lead web site: www.epa.gov/lead/index.html

Proper Clean Up

- Never clean brushes or rinse paint containers into a street, catch basin, gutter, storm drain, or creek.
- Use latex paints rather than oil-based paints whenever possible. Oil based paints release harmful fumes and require solvents for cleanup.
- Look for non-solvent stripping products (citrus-based, peel-away, etc.) Choose solvents that are not chlorinated (for example, avoid methylene chloride).
- Brushes containing water based paint (latex) may be rinsed in a drain leading to the sanitary sewer (i.e., indoor plumbing).
- If you are on a septic system, water based paint brushes may be washed in a grassy area away from water bodies.
- When cleaning oil based paint from brushes, collect the solvents used and bring them to the Household Hazardous Waste Collection Center.