

Austin guide to...

CARPET CLEANING

Carpet cleaning wastewater contains cleaning agents, as well as grease, oil, dirt, and debris. If disposed of improperly, this wastewater can be harmful to our waterways. Cleaning agents can be toxic and increase the nutrient load in our waterways, depleting available oxygen for aquatic life to survive.



Federal, State and City stormwater regulations prohibit the discharge of materials, such as carpet cleaning wastewater, into storm sewers and waterways. Any person responsible for illegally discharging may be subject to legal action that includes cleanup costs and financial penalties.

To enjoy clean carpets and a clean environment, follow these simple tips.

Product Selection:

- **Choose an environmentally-friendly carpet cleaner. Look for products that use less water are non-toxic and biodegradable**
- **Non-toxic and biodegradable cleaning agents reduce the potential for more specialized and expensive wastewater disposal and environmental remediation**
- **Get the Material Safety Data Sheet for a product from the manufacturer or distributor and ask them about non-toxic and biodegradable options**

**24-HOUR POLLUTION HOTLINE:
512-974-2550**

For More Information:

- Discharge Regulations 512-974-2550
- Sanitary Sewer Discharges 512-972-1060
- Household Hazardous Waste Disposal 512-974-4343

Wastewater Disposal

Even non-toxic and biodegradable products can harm aquatic life, so all carpet cleaning products must be kept out of storm drains and waterways.

- **Obtain prior consent from the property owner for any on-site disposal**
- **Wastewater can be disposed of into sinks, showers, bathtubs, toilets, and sanitary sewer cleanouts, if the site is part of the sanitary sewer system. Know where the drains are plumbed prior to disposal because carpet cleaning products may be harmful to septic systems**
- **Use a lint trap or filter to prevent debris from clogging the drain. Dispose of the dried lint and sediment with regular trash**
- **Wastewater from use of non-toxic, biodegradable cleaning products may be disposed of on the job site in a vegetated area sufficient in size to prevent any runoff**
- **Wastewater can also be collected by the cleaning company and taken back to their place of business for disposal in a pre-approved and permitted sanitary system drain**
- **In Austin, contact the Special Services Division of the Austin Water Utility (512-972-1060) for sanitary sewer system discharge approval and permitting**

Chemical Handling and Disposal

- **Follow label and Material Safety Data Sheet instructions**
- **Unused cleaning chemicals can be taken to the City's Household Hazardous Waste Collection Facility**



www.austintexas.gov/watershed/pollution-prevention-and-reduction