

CATCH BASIN INSPECTION AND CLEANING PROCEDURES

Town of Merrimac, Massachusetts

Standard Operating Procedure

Introduction

Catch basins help minimize flooding and protect water quality by removing trash, sediment, decaying debris, and other solids from stormwater runoff. These materials are retained in a sump below the invert of the outlet pipe. Catch basin cleaning reduces foul odors, prevents clogs in the storm drain system, and reduces the loading of suspended solids, nutrients, and bacteria to receiving waters.

During regular cleaning and inspection procedures, data can be gathered related to the condition of the physical basin structure and its frame and grate and the quality of stormwater conveyed by the structure. Observations such as the following can indicate sources of pollution within the storm drain system:

- Oil sheen
- Discoloration
- Trash and debris

Both bacteria and petroleum can create a sheen on the water surface. The source of the sheen can be differentiated by disturbing it, such as with a pole. A sheen caused by a oil will remain intact and move in a swirl pattern; a sheen caused by bacteria will separate and appear “blocky”. Bacterial sheen is not a pollutant but should be noted.

Observations such as the following can indicate a potential connection of a sanitary sewer to the storm drain system, which is an illicit discharge.

- Indications of sanitary sewage, including fecal matter or sewage odors
- Foaming, such as from detergent
- Optical enhancers, fluorescent dye added to laundry detergent

Each catch basin should be cleaned and inspected at least annually. Catch basins in high-use areas may require more frequent cleaning. Performing street sweeping on an appropriate schedule will reduce the amount of sediment, debris, and organic matter entering the catch basins, which will in turn reduce the frequency with which structures need to be cleaned.

Cleaning Procedure

Catch basin inspection cleaning procedures should address both the grate opening and the basin’s sump. Document any and all observations about the condition of the catch basin structure and water quality on the Town’s standard Catch Basin Inspection Form.

Catch basin inspection and cleaning procedures include the following:

1. Work upstream to downstream.
2. Clean sediment and trash off grate.
3. Visually inspect the outside of the grate.

4. Visually inspect the inside of the catch basin to determine cleaning needs.
5. Inspect catch basin for structural integrity.
6. Determine the most appropriate equipment and method for cleaning each catch basin.
 - a. Manually use a shovel to remove accumulated sediments, or
 - b. Use a bucket loader to remove accumulated sediments, or
 - c. Use a high pressure washer to clean any remaining material out of catch basin while capturing the slurry with a vacuum.
 - d. If necessary, after the catch basin is clean, use the rodder of the vacuum truck to clean downstream pipe and pull back sediment that might have entered downstream pipe.
7. If contamination is suspected, chemical analysis will be required to determine if the materials comply with the Massachusetts DEP Hazardous Waste Regulations, 310 CMR 30.000 (<http://www.mass.gov/dep/service/regulations/310cmr30.pdf>). Chemical analysis required will depend on suspected contaminants. Note the identification number of the catch basin on the sample label, and note sample collection on the Town's standard Catch Basin Inspection Form.
8. Properly dispose of collected sediments. See below for guidance.
9. If illicit discharges are observed or suspected, notify the appropriate Departments in accordance with the Town's Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) Bylaw and IDDE Program.
10. At the end of each day, document location and number of catch basins cleaned, amount of waste collected, and disposal method for all screenings.
11. Report additional maintenance or repair needs to the appropriate Department.

Disposal of Screenings

If the catch basin cleanings from the Town's storm water-only drainage systems are not being handled and disposed of by a third party, they may be disposed at any landfill that is permitted by MassDEP to accept solid waste. MassDEP does not routinely require stormwater-only catch basin cleanings to be tested before disposal, unless there is evidence that they have been contaminated by a spill or some other means.

Screenings may need to be placed in a drying bed to allow water to evaporate before proper disposal. In this case, ensure that the screenings are managed to prevent pollution.