

# Environmentally Responsible Best Management Practices

## 17 Maintaining Catch Basins

A catch basin is an inlet to a storm drain system that typically includes a grate where stormwater enters the catch basin, and a basin to capture sediment, debris, and associated pollutants. The purpose of the basin is to help prevent the downstream pipes from becoming clogged and to reduce the amount of sediment and debris being discharged into our rivers and streams. Many catch basins are installed with a downturned elbow or tee to trap floatable material. Storm drain inlets that do not contain basins or outlet traps are not effective in reducing pollutants in stormwater.

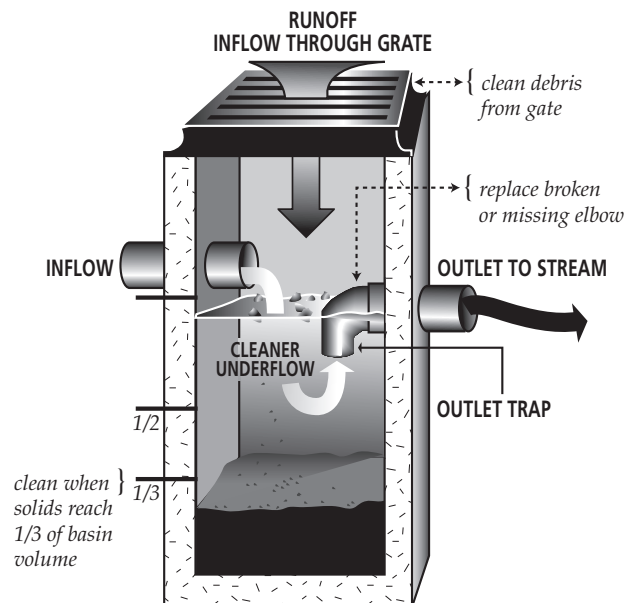
Catch basins must be cleaned periodically to maintain their ability to trap sediment and provide drainage for stormwater. The removal of sediment, decaying debris, and associated pollutants from catch basins has aesthetic and water quality benefits. The benefits include reducing foul odors, solids, and other pollutants that reach receiving waters.

### Grates:

- Remove leaves and trash so the grate doesn't clog.
- Consider marking the message "Dump No Waste, Drains to Stream" next to your grates in areas that may be at risk. Vendors can be found in the telephone directories or on the web.

### Catch Basin:

- The more frequently a catch basin is cleaned, the more pollutants it removes. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recommends cleaning if the depth of solids reaches one-third the depth from the basin bottom to the invert of the lowest pipe into or out of the basin.
- To clean the catch basin you can hire a contractor by looking in a telephone directory or you can do it yourself by lifting the grate and using a bucket (to remove water) and a shovel to remove the sediment.



- Dispose of the water in a sanitary sewer through a shop drain or sink. Otherwise, use a toilet or other appropriate drain. Let the removed solids dry out, then properly dispose of them. When deciding how to dispose of the sediment, you need to consider the types of activities and pollutants on site. Catch basins in areas used for chemical or hazardous waste storage, material handling or equipment maintenance may collect the chemicals used in these activities from spills or via stormwater runoff. Solids removed from catch basins at commercial or industrial sites are usually not considered hazardous waste and may be disposed of as solid waste. However, as the "generator" of this waste, you are responsible for making that decision and deciding how to properly manage the solids. If you need assistance deciding whether the solids should be managed as a hazardous waste, contact the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality at 503-229-5263. Make sure the removed solids don't wash back into your catch basin, and don't dispose of them on your or someone else's property.

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**Be sure to follow safety precautions:**

- Use caution in removing the grate as it may be heavy.
- Don't leave an open catch basin unattended.
- Never enter a catch basin or other drainage structure unless you are properly trained.
- Ensure proper traffic safety is in place.

**Tips:**

- Sweep your lot regularly to reduce the need for catch basin cleaning.
- Consider installing and maintaining catch basin inserts or an oil-absorbent pillow.
- Repair or replace damaged outlet traps.
- Install an outlet trap if there isn't one already. They're inexpensive and make it easier and cheaper to remove any floatable pollutants that spill into your catch basin.
- Make sure your chemical and waste storage practices aren't exposed to rainfall and stormwater runoff.
- Don't wash vehicles or equipment to the storm sewer system.

For additional Best Management Practices to minimize pollution from other site activities, call 503-823-5320.



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