



Preventing Storm Drain Pollution

Reconstructing, renovating, or repaving a parking lot can improve property value, but it may also trigger mandatory stormwater treatment requirements designed to protect local waterways. Construction contractors and property owners need to be aware that some parking lot reconstruction activities can trigger these requirements, and work with local agencies to ensure that the project complies with stormwater regulations.

A permit from the local agency will be required if stormwater treatment is needed.

WHY IS STORMWATER TREATMENT NEEDED?

As rainwater flows over paved surfaces such as driveways, sidewalks, roads, and parking lots, it can pick up pollutants such as motor oil, metals, pesticides, and litter. These pollutants are then carried into storm drains which flow directly to local creeks and the San Francisco Bay, without any cleaning or filtering to remove pollutants.

WHAT DOES STORMWATER TREATMENT MEAN?

Stormwater treatment using **Low Impact Development (LID)** measures is required for many new development or redevelopment projects, **including parking lots**.

LID measures allow stormwater runoff from buildings, streets, and parking lots to soak into the ground and/or be filtered by soil and plants and prevent pollutants from flowing into storm drains and local waterways. For parking lot projects, LID treatment measures may include the following:

- Bioretention areas or flow-through planters
- Pervious pavement
- Infiltration trenches
- Dispersion onto adjacent landscaping (up to a 2:1 ratio of parking lot area to landscaped area)



*Bioretention area in a parking lot.
(Image Credit: EOA)*

PARKING LOT RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE STORMWATER TREATMENT

LID measures are required for projects that create and/or replace **5,000 square feet (sf)** or more of impervious surface, collectively over the entire project site. The following practices may trigger stormwater treatment requirements:

- Replacing asphalt or concrete down to the base layer (top of aggregate) or deeper, including dig outs.
- Repairing the pavement base (including preparation for chip seal or other surface treatments).
- Upgrading dirt parking lots or landscaped area to gravel, bituminous surface treatment (e.g., chip seal), asphalt, or concrete.
- Upgrading gravel parking lots to bituminous surface treatment (e.g., chip seal), asphalt, or concrete.

Note that stormwater treatment will be required for the entire site if the project is reconstructing 50% or more of the existing impervious area.



*Parking lot asphalt being replaced
to base layer.*

(Image Credit: City of Campbell)



PARKING LOT RECONSTRUCTION ACTIVITIES THAT DO NOT REQUIRE STORMWATER TREATMENT

The following routine maintenance activities DO NOT require stormwater treatment:

- Pothole and square cut patching (*note that dig outs count towards the 5,000 sf threshold*).
- Crack sealing.
- Overlaying existing asphalt or concrete pavement with asphalt or concrete, without expanding
- Upgrading a bituminous surface treatment (e.g., chip or slurry seal) with concrete or asphalt (including wedge grinding), without expanding the area of coverage.
- Applying a bituminous surface treatment (e.g., chip or slurry seal) to existing asphalt or concrete pavement, without expanding the areas of coverage.



WHAT IF STORMWATER TREATMENT IS REQUIRED?

If the project is subject to stormwater treatment requirements, you must:

- Contact your local Agency – Permits are required for projects that are required to install stormwater treatment facilities (i.e., projects that create and/or replace 5,000 sf or more of impervious surface).
- Design and install LID measures – Design guidance is available in the [SCVURPPP C.3 Stormwater Handbook*](#). You will need to work with a licensed civil engineer to design LID measures.
- Ensure ongoing inspection and maintenance of all installed treatment measures.



Need help? Don't let stormwater requirements significantly increase the cost of your project and delay your project! Contact your local agency for more information.

STORMWATER POLLUTION CONTROL AGENCIES

For spills or materials entering a creek, pond or reservoir call Valley Water's 24/7 Pollution Hotline: 1-888-510-5151

For more information on preventing stormwater pollution, contact your local agency:

Campbell, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, Saratoga (West Valley Communities)	(408) 354-4734	Mountain View	(650) 903-6378
Cupertino	(408) 777-3354	Palo Alto.....	(650) 329-2122
Los Altos	(650) 947-2770	San José	(408) 945-3000
Los Altos Hills.....	(650) 941-7222	Santa Clara	(408) 615-3080
Milpitas.....	(408) 586-3365	Unincorporated Santa Clara County.....	(408) 918-4609
		Sunnyvale.....	(408) 730-7260

* SCVURPPP C.3 Stormwater Handbook: <https://scvurppp.org/2024/10/28/c-3-stormwater-handbook-2024/>