

Hiring Contractors



In order to protect water quality, here are some questions you can ask before hiring a home service contractor:



Painting Services:

What type of paint will you use? Latex paints are more resource-friendly and can be used for most applications in place of more hazardous oil-based paints. It is best to use the least toxic alternative to protect water quality.

How and where do you clean your equipment?

Equipment should never be cleaned so that the wash water runs into the street. Latex paints may be cleaned up inside with soap and water and are considered disposable in the sanitary sewer at diluted conditions; oil paints are cleaned with hydrocarbons, always in a container, and the cleaning fluid reused after solids have settled, dried, and are disposed of in the trash.

Lawn Care Services:

Is the fertilizer right for my soil type? Soils in your area may not need many nutrients, so knowledge by the contractor about local soil chemistry is crucial.

What fertilizer application are you applying? Quick-release fertilizers wash off more easily than organic, putting water quality at risk, so organics are preferred; also, low phosphorous fertilizers are always the best choice in this area.

How often and when do you apply? Ideally, no more than twice a year, spring and fall, and never before a large rain event is forecast.

Will you be applying pesticides? The ideal is no insecticide or herbicide applications, but natural alternatives or limited use of safer chemicals, proper timing, and targeted application is the next best approach if weeds and pests persist.

Carpet Cleaning Services:

How and where will you discharge the water? Most likely through your sink, shower, tub or toilet to the sanitary sewer, never to the street and storm drain. Some companies may collect and haul away for disposal.

What do you use to clean the carpets? Water-based cleaners are the most resource friendly; non-toxic & biodegradable are also key.

Do you filter the wastewater to remove the larger materials before discharging? This is required prior to discharging to the sanitary sewer.

What do you do with the residue? When dried, it can be disposed in curbside trash.

What YOU can do!

- Buy products and services that do not harm our natural resources.
- Ask contractors pertinent questions before hiring them.
- Report suspected illegal dumping by contractors in your neighborhood.
- Dispose of water-based latex paint by solidifying it and putting it in the trash.
- Pass this information on!



Understanding Your Role in Reducing Stormwater Runoff Pollution WHEN HIRING CONTRACTORS

Contractor operations at your home can affect water quality. Wastes generated from typical home contractor services, like lawn care, carpet cleaning, and painting contractors, are among the many common stormwater pollutants that can degrade our water quality. The wastewater that drains from inside your house is treated and cleaned before it enters a creek, but any flows in the street outside your home go directly to the nearest drainageway, without any treatment. So it is very important that nothing is dumped onto street surfaces or into the storm drains. It is illegal to dispose of wash water from contractor activities to the storm drain system. The information on this brochure is designed to assist you in selecting home service contractors, recognizing potential illegal discharges, and reporting these observations.

■ Brochures in this set:

- **A**round the House” (Spring 2004)
- **A**uto Care” (Summer 2004)
- **A**t-Risk Creeks, Streams & Lakes: When Hiring A Contractor” (Spring 2005)
- **A**dverse Affects of Runoff: Your Annual Check-up” (Summer 2005)

■ Disposal Tip

Latex paint can be disposed of properly with just a couple easy steps! Most latex paints are comprised of mostly water and are not hazardous. To dispose of latex paint, solidify, leave the lid off, and place in your curbside trash.

How? Take the lid off and allow liquids to evaporate; or use an equal mix of cat litter to solidify; or paint layers on cardboard.
Why? By appropriately disposing of latex paint with your curbside trash, we can reduce costs of our household hazardous waste roundup collections and use our collection service for the more hazardous household materials.



Arapahoe County Stormwater Co-op Group:

Arapahoe County	720-874-6500
Town of Columbine Valley	303-795-1434
City of Littleton	303-795-3865
City of Centennial	303-734-4567
City of Cherry Hills Village	303-783-2731
City of Englewood	303-762-2636
City of Glendale	303-639-4500
City of Greenwood Village	303-708-6135
City of Sheridan	303-738-1098
Cherry Creek School District	720-554-4455
Littleton School District #6	303-347-3300
East Cherry Creek Valley WSD	303-693-3800
ACWWA	303-790-4830
Inverness WSD	303-649-9857
Centennial 25 Metro District	303-300-8797

For more information check out www.epa.gov/npdes