



Best Management Practices *for* Sand-Oil Separators

What is a sand-oil separator?

A sand-oil separator is a below ground tank designed to remove oil, sand, dirt, and other solids from auto body wash water before any wastewater is discharged to the sewer system. Facilities in which sand, oil, or fuel from auto body wash water may inadvertently enter the sewer system, such as carwashes and vehicle repair facilities with carwashes should have a sand-oil separator. The separator treats waste by allowing oil and other substances lighter than water to float, and heavier substances, such as sand, to sink to the bottom of the interceptor. This separation ensures that only wastewater free from sand and oil will enter the sewer system. In order to properly function and prevent pollution, the separator must be properly maintained.

Enforcement of Sand-Oil Separator BMPs

The Napa Sanitation District (NapaSan) Code states in Section 4.04.090 that in lieu of a wastewater discharge permit, the District may develop BMPs that serve as an enforceable control mechanism for prohibited wastes. The BMPs listed below as “REQUIRED” will be assessed when a NapaSan inspector visits your facility.

Inspections by NapaSan

Carwash and vehicle repair and maintenance facilities are inspected by a NapaSan Inspector to ensure compliance with NapaSan Code. When the inspector visits, he/she will check the sand-oil separator for proper function and maintenance records. NapaSan has the right at any time to pull a sample to check for compliance with the local limits¹ found in the NapaSan Code.

Questions?

If you have any questions, please contact the NapaSan Inspectors by calling 707-258-6000. These BMPs and the Sewer Use Ordinance are also available on our website at www.NapaSan.com.

¹Local limits are technically based, defensible numerical limits imposed on industrial users by NapaSan. The local limits are set for toxic pollutants that can interfere with the treatment process or pass through the treatment process without being removed. Local limits can be found in the NapaSan Code online at www.NapaSan.com.

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Best Management Practices for Sand-Oil Separators

The following Best Management Practices are **REQUIRED**:

These BMPs will be enforced through inspections by NapaSan Inspectors.

Practices

- Sand-oil separators must meet the requirements of the California Plumbing Code and any other applicable NapaSan and City of Napa Building Standards and Regulations.
- Only vehicle wash water shall be discharged to the sand-oil separator. No domestic wastewater or other process wastewater shall be discharged to the separator.
- Sand-oil separators must be permitted by NapaSan, and all separators installed after January 1, 2019 require a maintenance agreement and submittal of maintenance logs to NapaSan via email.
- Sand-oil separators must be regularly cleaned by a professional contractor, and records of cleaning or maintenance of the separator must be kept on-site for a minimum of two years.
- Check separator solids depth routinely. The combined thickness of floating oil and the bottom solids shall not be more than 25% of the depth measured from the bottom of the separator to the top of the floating oil.
- All sand-oil separators shall be located so that they are easily accessible for cleaning and maintenance.
- All sand-oil separators shall be properly vented so they do not become air-bound where closed covers are in use.
- Spills shall not be washed into the sand-oil separator. Dry clean-up methods must be used to clean spills to prevent the discharge of hazardous materials to the sewer system.
- After cleaning of the separator has occurred, ensure that the inlet, outlet, and air vents are clear of obstructions and the separator is in working order.

The following Best Management Practices are **RECOMMENDED**:

Practices

- At vehicle maintenance and repair facilities, wash vehicles and engines as infrequently as possible.
- Post signage and BMPs where they will be readily accessible to employees.
- Whenever possible, chemical storage and the use of chemicals should not occur near the carwash area drains that flow to the sand-oil separator.
- Utilize grates and screens over the drains that flow to the sand-oil separator in order to keep solids from entering the separator.