



Department of Environmental Protection

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Management of Catch Basin Cleanings

Catch basin cleanings - solid materials such as leaves, sand and twigs removed from storm water collection systems during cleaning operations - are typically classified as a solid waste by the Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP). Catch basin cleanings must be handled and disposed in accordance with the agency's applicable regulations, policies and guidance.

Handling & Disposal

Except as explained below, catch basin cleanings from storm water-only drainage systems may be disposed at any landfill that is permitted by MassDEP to accept solid waste.

MassDEP does not routinely require storm water 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. Contaminated catch basin cleanings must be evaluated in accordance with [310 CR 30.000: Hazardous Waste Regulations](#) and handled as hazardous waste if appropriate.

Systems that collect storm water run-off into sanitary sewers are called "combined sewers." MassDEP may require cleanings from combined sewer catch basins to be tested before disposal.

Landfill Restrictions

The MassDEP [310 CMR 19.000: Solid Waste Management Facility Regulations](#) (specifically see Section 19.130(7)) prohibit Massachusetts landfills from accepting materials that contain free draining liquids. When there is no free water in a truck used to transport catch basin cleanings, the agency will generally be satisfied that the material is sufficiently dry. Otherwise, the material will need to undergo a Paint Filter Liquids Test.

One way to remove liquids is to use a hydraulic lift truck during catch basin cleaning operations so that the material can be decanted at the site. After material from several catch basins along the same system is loaded, the truck may be elevated so that any free draining liquid is allowed to flow back into the drainage structure.

MassDEP may approve catch basin cleanings for use as grading and shaping material at landfills undergoing closure (see the agency's Revised Guidelines for Determining Closure Activities at Inactive Unlined Landfill Sites for additional information). Catch basin cleanings may be used as daily cover or grading material at active landfills only with specific MassDEP approval of the proposed use.

Consult with the Solid Waste Section Chief in the appropriate MassDEP Regional Office for information about applying for an approval and/or a Beneficial Use Determination (see Section 19.060 for other uses, including non-landfill uses).