



The University of New Mexico

Risk Management And Safety, Health and Environmental Affairs

STORM WATER POLLUTION PREVENTION AT UNM

SHEA would like your help in keeping the storm water that flows off the campus as clean as possible. This article will summarize what the issues are and how you can help UNM to be a good neighbor for the environment.

Similar to most metropolitan areas, nearly all storm water in the Albuquerque area flows to the Rio Grande River without any treatment. Therefore, the best approach is to keep materials that may harm the river from being flushed away by storm water. The following list of materials will negatively impact the river if flushed away with storm water:

*Hazardous Chemicals, including automotive fluids, e.g., gasoline, oil, coolant, transmission and brake fluids, etc.;

*Litter, e.g., paper and plastic trash and to a lesser extent leaves and plant materials;

*Loose/Disturbed Soil, e.g., from construction sites;

*Animal Wastes, especially dog droppings; and,

*Construction and artwork materials, especially paint, paint rinse water, paint thinners and powders, e.g., lime.

How You Can Help

We live in an arid climate and therefore, do not often have to plan for rain or consider what will happen if it rains. Therefore, we need to develop an active consciousness that considers,

“What will happen if it rains?” The following measures will help UNM to remain a good environmental steward in this regard:

1. Have your vehicle properly repaired and maintained to prevent fluid leaks while parked at UNM. Better yet, ride a bike, car-pool, take the bus, etc. Performing oil changes or other significant automotive repair or maintenance work on campus outside of the proper facilities, e.g., the PPD Automotive Center, is forbidden by UNM policy;
2. Pick up litter and put it in a trash receptacle;
3. Bring bags/containers to pick up and properly dispose of your dog’s droppings as you walk or jog on campus;
4. Wash water-based paint out of brushes, etc., in a sink that drains to the sanitary sewer;
5. Oil-based paints and thinners, as with nearly all hazardous materials and wastes cannot be dumped any-where (e.g., down the drain, on the ground or in the trash). They must be containerized, labeled and disposed of through SHEA for all UNM operations. Contact SHEA for advice on disposal options for non-UNM generated wastes as well; and
6. If you see a significant automotive fluid leak, someone changing/dumping their oil on campus, or any activities on campus including construction

work that threaten storm water, please promptly contact SHEA at 277-2753. Please do not report oil stains/drips on pavement since asphalt fortunately absorbs lubricating oils and storm water will not readily flush it away.

To carry this a step further, if you see a friend or neighbor doing something that could pollute UNM storm water, e.g., littering or not picking up their dog’s droppings while on campus, please politely educate them. Additionally, if you or a campus environmental advocacy group would like to further help SHEA’s storm water pollution prevention efforts, please contact Vern Hershberger at 277-2753.

