



Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission

Regulatory Services Group Industrial Discharge Control Program

Oil/Water Separator Best Management Practices

The Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission (WSSC) is implementing an oil/water (O/W) separator initiative to educate our Industrial Users (IUs) on the importance of maintaining separators. The Commission requires proper maintenance of all O/W separators to prevent the introduction of petroleum products, mineral oil products, non-biodegradable cutting oil, etc. into the WSSC's sanitary sewer. Oily, viscous products can cause interference with the operation of the wastewater conveyance system, including: clogging pumps, obstructing the wastewater flow, disrupting the wastewater treatment plant operation and possibly causing a pass-through at the plant into the receiving waterways.

If you are an industrial /commercial facility with one or more O/W separator(s) here are some Best Management Practices (BMPs) to assist you in complying with WSSC requirements:

- First and foremost, locate your O/W separator(s). This can best be achieved by reviewing the facility's on-site sewer plans. Some facilities are not aware that they exist. This may be due to the fact that on the surface they may appear to be sanitary sewer manholes or they may have been covered over with asphalt during construction or re-modeling;
- O/W separators do not treat or eliminate the oil. They collect the oil; therefore, they must be inspected, maintained and have the accumulated oil pumped out on a regular basis. Based on flow, typical service should occur every 4-6 months;
- remove oil and have it hauled by a hauler licensed to transport this product to an appropriate facility for treatment (not a permitted septic hauler);
- use absorbent materials to capture waste oils and liquids before they enter the separator;
- sweep all areas prior to wash down;
- use screens to prevent solids from entering trench drains and/or O/W separator(s); and,
- inspect your unit and repair as needed.

Remember to never put gasoline or other fire/explosion hazards into an oil/water separator or the sanitary sewer