

# We Keep Pollution out of Puget Sound!

## Dear Restaurant Owner/Manager:

You and your staff play an important role in keeping pollution out of the storm drainage system and out of local streams and Puget Sound. Washing kitchen mats, trash bins, hood filters and other equipment outside in the parking lot or alley, or dumping grease, wash water, or other liquids outside can send pollution into storm drains or ditches that lead to streams and to Puget Sound. In Thurston County, storm drains eventually discharge into surface or groundwater.

Here are four simple practices that you and your employees can follow to help keep your establishment clean while preventing stormwater pollution:

1. **Wash kitchen mats indoors near a floor drain or in a utility sink.** (If you hire a contractor, then ask the contractor to clean them near a floor drain or in a utility sink.)
2. **Collect and store grease in containers with tightly fitting lids.** (When pouring outside make sure to clean up any accidental spills.)
3. **Sweep up debris around trash bins and soak up spills with kitty litter or another oil absorbing product.** Bag and trash debris. Keep trash bins covered. (If your dumpsters leak, contact the hauling company to request a new one.)
4. **Wash hood filters in a sink – only if connected to the sanitary sewer system\* -- or container. Dump dirty wash water down the sink or in a toilet\*:** (If you hire a contractor, then ask the contractor to wash the hood filters in a sink or container.)

*\*Grease can harm septic systems.*

To remind your staff of these practices, the storm and surface water utilities (SSWU) of Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County are giving you a sticker to place on your hood vent and a poster to display to employees. Please go over these practices with your employees, display the poster where your employees are sure to see it, such as the exit door of bathrooms or the door that leads to the alley or dumpsters and attach the sticker to the hood vent. Staff from the SSWU's are available to give you technical assistance regarding the practices on the poster. We want to help you to ensure that "We Keep Pollution Out of Puget Sound."

Thank you for your cooperation and assistance in posting the hood vent sticker and poster, and for talking with your staff about these practices. For more information, please contact Ann Marie Pearce at [pearcea@co.thurston.wa.us](mailto:pearcea@co.thurston.wa.us) or 360-754-3355 ext. 6857.

**It is illegal to dump any substance down a storm drain or directly into a body of water. Spills can result in an illicit discharge to the storm drainage facility. Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater and Thurston County all have ordinances that prohibit illicit discharges. Violators can be fined up to \$1000 per violation and or imprisonment of up to 90 days (fines vary by jurisdiction).**

