



**GREEN
WRENCH**
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY & ENVIRONMENT

TOOLBOX NEWSLETTER

DID YOU KNOW?

It only takes a small quantity of some substances to contaminate millions of gallons of groundwater.

For instance, only a few ounces of perchloroethylene (a degreasing solvent found in some aerosol brake cleaners) can render millions of gallons of water unsafe to drink.

Make sure all hazardous materials are stored in closed containers and covered to prevent contact from stormwater.



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SEPTEMBER 2020



*DC Water employees report that the soy-based hydraulic fluid worked very well in their Vac-Cons— the large trucks used to clean out the sewer system— as well as skimmer boats used to pick up debris from the Anacostia River.
(Photo by United Soybean Board)*

DC WORKERS BREATHE BETTER WITH BIOBASED

Headaches and nasal irritation were a common complaint among fleet maintenance staff at the District of Columbia's Water and Sewer Authority (DC Water) after using decal adhesive removers and other harsh chemicals.

The United Soybean Board (USB) partnered with the Greater Washington Region Clean Cities Coalition to introduce soy-biobased products to DC Water through pilot projects.

"The adhesive remover we had been using can make you sick if you get downwind of it," said Anthony Lancaster, fleet maintenance supervisor for DC Water. "The soy-based alternative is not only a green product, but it doesn't cause headaches or nasal irritation. And, it did a great job removing decals from our vehicles."

SOY-BASED HYDRAULIC FLUID ENSURES SMOOTH OPERATION

Smooth operation is critical for DC Water's vac-cons – the large trucks used to clean out the sewer system – and soy-based hydraulic fluid is up to the task. Maintenance staff added biobased hydraulic fluid to the vac-cons and to their skimmer boats, which are equipped with a hydraulic lift and conveyor belt used to pick-up debris from the Anacostia River.

"The biobased hydraulic fluid has worked very well for us and has the added benefit of being more environmentally friendly and made from a renewable resource" said Lancaster.

DC Water's Fleet Director Timothy Fitzgerald added, "I try to get my guys to work smarter, not harder. We have introduced these products a bit at a time, charting the use for comparison. I am ready to accept them and move on to test some more of these soy-based products."

The GreenWrench Team can help you introduce new products and even give you products for free. How? Reach out to gwe@dc.gov.

Thank you to Soy Biobased for permission to use this story. Read the full story at www.soybiobased.org/success-stories/dc-workers-breathe-better-with-biobased/

SIGN UP

The GreenWrench Program provides free pollution prevention guidance and training to District auto body and repair shops. GreenWrench services are all free and include:

1. Technical assistance visits
2. Workshops
3. GreenWrench Toolbox Newsletter
4. Certification

Sign up online at doee.dc.gov/service/greenwrench or by calling (202) 645-4231.

ADOPT-A-PARK PROGRAM

Looking to get outside and help DC clean and green? The Adopt-A-Park program is for District residents interested in keeping a neighborhood park safe and clean for the community to enjoy. By picking up litter and other waste blown, washed or illegally dumped into local parks, you are also preventing trash from polluting streams, rivers and oceans, endangering wildlife along the way.

Who should volunteer?

Any District resident, community group, association, corporation, or governmental agency interested in improving a neighborhood park through routine litter pickups and other beautification projects.

Interested in signing up?

Fill out the [Adopt-A-Park](#) form.

Because parks in the District can either be locally owned by the District’s Department of Parks and Recreation or federally owned by the National Park Service, we need to know which park is of interest in order to direct you to the correct branch of the program.

Department of Energy and Environment will follow up on next steps once we have received your information.

For questions on the program, you can contact Kyaira Ware at (202)815-4112 or kyaira.ware@dc.gov



(Photo by Krista Schlyer)

COVID-19 RESOURCES FOR BUSINESSES

Recursos sobre el COVID-19 en su idioma • COVID-19 : ressources en français • በቋንቋዎ የኮቪድ-19 (COVID-19) የመረጃ ጥንቃቄ • COVID-19资源（使用您的语言）• Thông tin hỗ trợ COVID19 trên ngôn ngữ của quý vị • 코로나바이러스 감

The District of Columbia Government provides resources to help residents and businesses during the COVID-19 pandemic. Resources can be found online, such as, how to keep yourself and workers safe, financial support for local businesses, and other resources, such as testing and free groceries for those in need. Find more information on what is available at: coronavirus.dc.gov or from the following link:

<https://coronavirus.dc.gov/recovery-business>

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) has resources for businesses on how to respond to and protect worker and customers during the pandemic. Examples include posters and flyers that can be used to educate workers and customers, instructions on how to develop a plan to maintain operations during the pandemic to builds resiliency in case of worker shortages, and tips on how to provide customer service remotely.

<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/guidance-business-response.html>

The Occupational Safety and Health Agency (OSHA) also has provided guidance on how to protect employees during COVID-19:

<https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/covid-19/>

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has issued guidance on enforcement and compliance with environmental regulations. On March 26 EPA issued a COVID-19 Temporary Enforcement Policy that offers protection for businesses against enforcement of environmental laws that was retroactive beginning March 13, 2020. This temporary policy recently expired on August 31, but will continue to apply to any actions and omissions that occurred between March 13 and August 31, 2020. Now that the temporary policy has expired, the enforcement of federal environmental regulations will resume as normal.

<https://www.epa.gov/enforcement/covid-19-implications-epas-enforcement-and-compliance-assurance-program>

The DC Sustainable Energy Utility (DCSEU) provides rebates to businesses that want to upgrade their systems and appliances to energy-efficient options. While this program is independent of the COVID response, it includes rebates on upgrades to HVAC and other air-handling systems, that may also help prevent the spread of COVID-19 by improving indoor air circulation.

<https://www.dcseu.com>

GET CERTIFIED BY REDUCING WASTE

One of the GREEN activities in the GreenWrench Certification is to identify “Methods to reduce waste”. This article identifies housekeeping practices and products that would qualify for this activity and help limit trash entering landfills.

Improving general housekeeping practices is an easy way to reduce waste and prevent pollution.

Here are some housekeeping tips:

1. Keep storage and work areas clean and well organized, and keep all containers properly labeled and closed.
2. Inspect materials upon delivery, and immediately return unacceptable materials to the supplier.
3. Rotate stock to minimize waste from expired materials. Mark the purchase with a date on each container and adopt a “first in, first out” policy so that older materials are used up before new ones are opened.
4. Keep accurate records of material usage so that reductions can be measured.
5. Regularly inspect outdoor waste containers to ensure they are kept closed and serviced when full.
6. Do no dispose of liquids in waste bins and keep outdoor bins covered to prevent liquids from collecting and leaking.
7. Train personnel to use the minimum amount of material to get the job done.

Additionally alternative products or practices could be used. Here are some suggestions:

Packaging:

- Buy in bulk to reduce packaging
- Use reusable containers

Office supplies:

- Use cardboard or metal binders
- Use refillable pens
- Have electronic bills and receipts
- Paper products made with recycled content
- Print double-sided
- Use non-toxic cleaning products

Food and drink:

- Have a water cooler/pitcher
- Have reusable cups
- Buy in bulk
- Compost food and napkins

Restrooms:

- Have products made with recycled content
- Have a hand dryer
- Have a motion-activated faucet
- Have non-toxic and sustainable cleaners and hand soaps.



(Photo by Environmental Protection Agency)