



What to Know if you Are a Plumber, Carpet Cleaner or Power Washer in the Rouge River Watershed

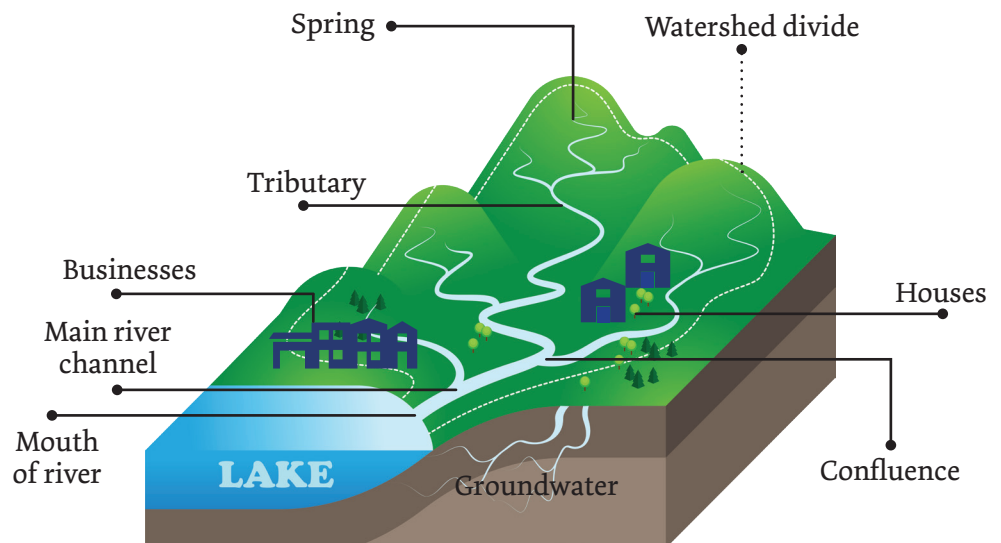


An introduction on permits & best management practices (BMPs) in the Rouge River Watershed

In Michigan, plumbers, carpet cleaners and power washers need to adhere to regulations and BMPs to prevent water pollution and manage drainage. These requirements are in place to protect the water quality of the Rouge River.

A watershed, also referred to as a drainage basin, is the land area that delivers rain and snow/ice melt to a stream or lake. Every contractor working in Michigan is in a watershed!

When it rains, stormwater flows over a construction site, picking up pollutants like sediment, debris, and chemicals from that loose soil and transport them to nearby storm drains or directly into rivers or lakes. Used water from power washing or carpet cleaning, if discharged to the ground or into a storm drain, can carry chemicals and pollution directly to our rivers and lakes. Even if the work you are contracted to do is not “next to the river,” your actions still have an impact on the water quality in the Rouge River watershed.



As a contractor, securing the correct permits and ensuring stormwater pollution prevention BMPs are in place prior to working will have a positive impact on your profits, employees, customers, the communities you work in, the Rouge River and ultimately one of our Great Lakes - Lake Erie!

Carpet Cleaners, Power Washers & Plumbers



IMPORTANT: Contact EGLE, the county, and the local authority for complete requirements, regulations, and discharge guidance as this brochure is an introduction and does not cover all information.

MORE INFORMATION: Visit allianceofrougecommunities.com/business.html or scan this QR code for more information and links to county and state websites for contractors working in the Rouge River Watershed.



Carpet Cleaners

In Michigan, carpet cleaning wastewater must be disposed of into the sanitary sewer system, not into a storm drain. Storm drains empty into local rivers and lakes without treatment, and carpet cleaning waste contains pollutants that can harm aquatic life. Improper disposal can lead to fines and environmental damage.



BMPs

- Inspect site to determine disposal options.
- Contain all washwater and use controls to prevent spills.
- Filter all wastewater before discharging to sanitary sewer to remove solids.
- Follow manufacturer instructions for all chemicals.
- Train employees on proper disposal procedures.
- Discharge wastewater into an indoor drain that leads to a sanitary sewer. If a sanitary sewer is not available, collect the wastewater in a vehicle tank and dispose of it properly at your facility or designated wastewater disposal site.
- Discharge to the ground may be an option if a groundwater discharge permit is obtained.

Power Washers

Power washers in Michigan need to prevent contaminated wash water from flowing into streets, ditches, or storm drains. Storm drains empty to local rivers and lakes without treatment, and power washing runoff can contain pollutants that harm water quality. Contact EGLE and the local authority to determine if a wastewater or groundwater discharge permit is needed.



BMPs

- Before starting, sweep, mop or use absorbents to remove debris, grease and dirt to reduce the amount of contamination in wash water.
- Use containment equipment like berms and mats, drain covers and plugs, absorbent materials, or wet vacuums.
- If using plain water, discharge to an indoor sanitary sewer drain or sink with property owner's and local sewer authority's approval.
- If wash water contains hazardous materials like oil, chemicals, or heavy metals, it must be treated as hazardous waste and requires proper disposal and may require a wastewater management plan and discharge permit with EGLE or the local authority.



Plumbers



Plumbers working in Michigan must follow specific plumbing codes, obtain the correct permits, prepare pollution prevention plans when needed, and use appropriate techniques to prevent pollution and manage drainage. Coordination with the State and local authority is necessary to prevent environmental contamination and protect water quality.

BMPs

- Follow Michigan's code for pipe materials, slope, and depth when working on storm drainage systems to ensure adequate flow and to prevent back-ups and flooding.
- Dispose of waste materials and chemicals properly to ensure they don't enter the storm drain.
- Implement erosion and sediment control measures like silt fences on construction sites.
- When providing downspout extensions, direct roof runoff away from paved areas and toward landscaped areas.
- Become knowledgeable about advanced techniques that provide sustainable drainage solutions when working with French drains, dry wells, or permeable pavers.

