

Environmental Compliance Inspections

Achieve compliance, prevent pollution, and implement best management practices that may save your business money



How We Help Businesses

We offer free Compliance Consultations, an Industrial User Academy, and Pollution Prevention Awards that publicize businesses in our service area that go above and beyond minimum compliance standards to achieve excellence in pollution prevention. We also partner with the Green Business Program. Such recognition can be used in your marketing materials to show your customers that you care about protecting our environment.

Our Environmental Compliance staff can recommend activities (called Best Management Practices or BMPs) that can significantly reduce the risk of pollution and may even save you money. These activities are good for the environment, your customers, and your business.



Helping Your Business To Protect Our Water Environment

Central Contra Costa Sanitary District (Central San) is a special district (not a county agency) with a five-member elected Board of Directors and about 300 employees. Our mission is to protect public health and the environment through safe and effective wastewater collection, treatment and disposal. Our Environmental Compliance staff consists of highly trained inspectors. Central San is committed to helping businesses in our service area comply with federal, state and local requirements for wastewater and stormwater discharge.



Environmental Compliance samples are tested to assess the effects of business operations on our water

Why We Inspect Businesses

By controlling pollutants at the source, we can do a better job of treating wastewater while protecting public health and the environment in a cost-effective manner—that is the goal of our Environmental Compliance staff, and why we routinely inspect businesses.

One of our major challenges in treating wastewater is removing things that do not belong in it. Harsh chemicals, solvents, pesticides, paint, grease, antifreeze — anything that goes down a drain will end up in either the sanitary sewer or storm drain systems. Many companies use chemicals and produce wastes which may be flammable, corrosive, reactive, or toxic. Improper discharges to the sewer can corrode pipes, cause fires and explosions, or otherwise harm people. Grease can build up in sewers and create blockages which lead to overflows into businesses, homes or storm drains. If toxic waste enters the sewer, it can upset the biological treatment processes at our treatment plant or pass through into the Bay. Even the most advanced treatment processes cannot entirely remove these types of pollutants, and it only takes a small amount to harm the sensitive marine environment.

Stormwater runoff is another major source of water pollution. Rain can wash outdoor spills and undesirable materials into storm drains, which flow directly (untreated) into our creeks and the Bay. The Federal Clean Water Act prohibits anything but rain down the storm drain.



Environmental Compliance Inspectors sample wastewater for pollutants

Resources for More Information

Central Contra Costa Sanitary District Environmental Compliance Section
(925) 229-7288
centralsan.org

Contra Costa Clean Water Program
(925) 313-2360
cccwcleanwater.org

Green Business Program
Contra Costa County
Hazardous Materials Program
(925) 655-3200
greenbusinessca.org



- Wastewater collection & treatment; Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) disposal for 353,000 people.
- Wastewater treatment and HHW disposal for 141,000 people in Concord and Clayton by contract.
- HHW disposal only.
- Central San's headquarters, treatment plant, and HHW Collection Facility are located in Martinez.
- ▼ Central San's Collection System Operations Division (sewer maintenance) is based in Walnut Creek.

Central Contra Costa Sanitary District
5019 Imhoff Place, Martinez, CA 94553

How We Inspect Businesses

OUR AUTHORITY--

State and federal laws mandate that local agencies such as Central San set minimum standards to protect the sewer and storm drain systems. Our Source Control Ordinance (Title 10 of the District Code) authorizes us to issue permits to certain types of operations, inspect businesses connected to the sanitary sewer, and conduct enforcement actions. We have also been authorized by certain towns and cities in our area to enforce their stormwater ordinances to control pollutants in stormwater runoff in conjunction with our Environmental Compliance inspections.

What You Can Expect During an Inspection

Our Environmental Compliance Inspectors may conduct unannounced site inspections to observe your facility during normal operations and take samples to determine if you are complying with sewer discharge limits and stormwater regulations. Businesses under permit are routinely inspected, sometimes annually. Typically, our inspector will: (1) tour your facility both inside and out, noting production processes, equipment and practices, housekeeping practices, sewer inlets, wastewater and stormwater discharges, pretreatment equipment, chemicals, materials, waste storage, vehicle and equipment storage, wash areas, etc.; (2) review your facility records to conduct a compliance assessment; (3) review inspection findings with your facility manager; and (4) issue enforcement documents, if necessary.

Enforcement Documents Include:

- **Required Information Form:** used to obtain copies of records and other information about the business's practices and production.
- **Referral Notice:** used to notify the business and other regulatory agencies (such as the Health Department or Fire Department) when problems outside of the scope of our program are observed.
- **Warning Notice:** issued for a minor ordinance violation (or a condition that, if uncorrected, could result in a violation).
- **Notice of Violation:** issued for ordinance violations, failure to respond to a Warning Notice, or Violations of Permit Conditions.

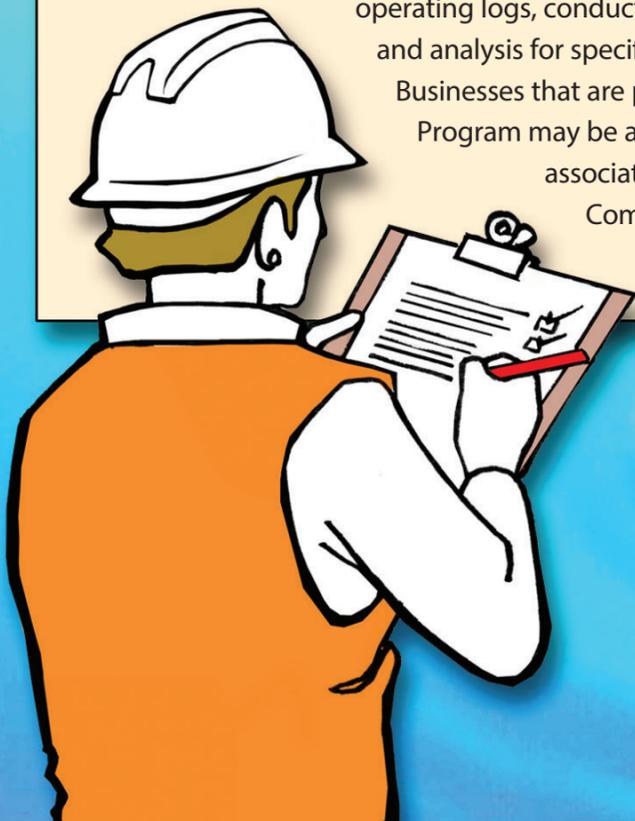
Failure to respond to citations will lead to escalated enforcement, which may include a fine and/or a Cease & Desist Order.

Environmental Compliance Permit Program

Central San's Environmental Compliance Program issues permits to certain types of businesses connected to the sewer system, to control discharge quality. The Federal Clean Water Act requires Central San to issue permits to certain types of operations (e.g. large-volume dischargers, electronics manufacturers). Central San can also require permits of any business that has the potential to violate our Source Control Ordinance. In general, we issue permits to business operations that have the potential to introduce large volumes or elevated concentrations of pollutants to our system.

When deciding whether to issue a permit to a particular facility, we require the business to complete an application and we conduct an Industrial User Survey. If we determine a facility requires a permit, we draft the permit and submit it to the business for review and signature. The permit contains requirements for the business to implement in order to monitor and control the discharge quality of its process wastewater (e.g., maintain operating logs, conduct monitoring of flow, complete periodic sampling and analysis for specified pollutants, submit reports/certifications).

Businesses that are permitted by the Environmental Compliance Program may be assessed fees to reimburse Central San for costs associated with implementing the Environmental Compliance Permit Program.



Minimize spillage when transferring wastes to containers.



Wash vehicles over an oil/water separator, NOT to a stormdrain.



Clean up spills right away.



Dispose of cooking oil in tallow bins.



Maintain grease interceptors properly, e.g., schedule periodic pump out.



Keep wastes in secondary containment (containers inside containment)