

The CW Tea



Monthly Newsletter from CWT Training Academy

Safety, Spill Response, and National Stormwater Day

National Stormwater Day (November 16 – see page 2!) is an opportunity to recognize how each of us plays a role in protecting the health of our waterways. Stormwater doesn't go to a treatment plant—it flows directly into rivers, lakes, and streams that support fish, wildlife, and our communities. That means every action we take on the ground, from preventing leaks to properly managing runoff, has a direct connection to water quality. **Safety practices and environmental protection are deeply intertwined; when we plan our work carefully, store materials securely, and maintain clean sites, we protect both our teams and our streams.**

Spill response training is one of the most important tools we have for keeping pollution out of the storm system. **Quick, informed action can make the difference between a contained incident and a costly cleanup.** Knowing how to identify a spill, deploy containment materials, and report it promptly ensures that our response is fast, coordinated, and effective. Routine spill drills and accessible spill kits reinforce that readiness and build confidence across crews and departments. Further, Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) training and having Source Control Inspector skills help staff recognize and respond to improper connections or discharges that may go unnoticed but can significantly impact water quality over time.

Together, these programs embody the purpose of National Stormwater Day: **to raise awareness, build skills, and foster a culture of stewardship.** By investing in spill response and IDDE training, and courses like the CWT PSCIC certification, we empower everyone—from field staff to office teams—to take immediate, informed action when it matters most. Each person trained, each spill prevented, and each discharge identified moves us closer to cleaner waterways and healthier ecosystems.

CWT Training Academy offers several trainings to keep you sharp, aware, and ready to respond.

Nathan Hardebeck, Owner of CWT and CWT Training Academy



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NATIONAL STORMWATER DAY 2025

November 16

National Stormwater Day is on November 16th, established by the [National Municipal Stormwater Alliance \(NMSA\)](#) to recognize the day the MS4 program was established in 1990. **It is a day to raise awareness about stormwater runoff, which is rain and snowmelt that flows over land and can carry pollutants into waterways.** Celebrations often include webinars, educational events, and community activities like adopting a storm drain, doing a litter cleanup, or attending a training.



ATTEND THE
NATIONAL
STORMWATER DAY
WEBINAR ON
NOVEMBER 17!

[REGISTER HERE](#)

The 2025 National Stormwater Day webinar will bring together stormwater professionals to recognize leading stormwater champions, provide an overview of the newly established EPA Stormwater Centers of Excellence for Stormwater Infrastructure Technologies (CESITs), and share updates from the recent Water Environment Federation (WEF) MS4 Needs Assessment Survey.



ILICIT DISCHARGE AND STORMWATER SPILLS IN THE NEWS

A spill of about 2,000 gallons of diesel fuel into Baltimore Harbor earlier this year illustrates how quickly incidents can turn into major environmental threats. The overflow from backup generator tanks at a facility in East Baltimore entered the stormwater system, making its way into the inner harbor and triggering a large scale response involving over 100 state and city agency personnel and contractors. The incident serves as a reminder of the importance of rigorous stormwater and spill-response practices at every site that handles fuel or toxic materials.

Policy, Compliance, and Regulatory Corner



Helping you navigate change in 2025

Had the overflow been stopped or contained at the source, the downstream impacts – cleanup costs, regulatory attention, and ecological damage – would likely have been far reduced. It also illustrates the crucial role of stormwater system integrity, immediate reporting, and rapid deployment of containment and recovery equipment to prevent contaminated runoff from entering waterways

SPOTLIGHT ON: Adsorption vs Absorption

 Adsorption and absorption are two fundamental processes that describe how materials capture or take in substances from their surroundings, and are the critical components that make spill kit materials work! But – what is the difference between them?

Adsorption occurs when molecules, atoms, or ions **adhere to the surface** of a solid or liquid—much like dust clinging to a surface or activated carbon trapping pollutants from water. A classic example of adsorption is the use of activated carbon to remove contaminants from water or air. This process is widely used in water spills, air purifiers, and industrial pollution control systems, as well as spill kits.

In contrast, absorption occurs when the entire volume of a material is literally ‘swallowed’ by another material. For example, a sponge soaking up water or a gas dissolving into a liquid are examples of absorption.

In spill response kits, **both adsorption and absorption play vital roles in containing and cleaning up hazardous materials.** Absorbent pads and booms work through absorption, soaking up liquids into their fibers or materials—much like a sponge. Adsorbent materials, on the other hand, may be used to bind oils, chemicals, or heavy metals onto their surfaces, preventing further spread and aiding cleanup. Understanding the difference helps responders select the right materials for specific types of spills, ensuring safer and more efficient environmental protection.





FOSTERING WORKPLACE EXCELLENCE:

SAFETY AS A CULTURE

Why safety must be more than a second thought

Safety in the workplace should never be treated as a task to check off a list—it must be embedded in the culture of an organization. **A true safety culture means that every employee, from management to field staff, views safety as a shared responsibility and an integral part of daily operations.** This kind of culture is evident by the equipment, training and communication to staff. *Getting a sample is important but if you have to ask your colleague to hold your ankles, it is not safe!* When safety is merely a compliance exercise, employees may follow rules without understanding the “why” behind them, leading to complacency or oversight. **In contrast, a culture of safety promotes constant awareness, open communication, and proactive thinking**—where people look out for each other and address potential hazards before they become incidents.

Building this kind of culture requires leadership commitment, consistent training, and leading by example. Managers must model safe behaviors, encourage reporting of near-misses without blame, and celebrate safety successes as part of overall performance. When workers see that their well-being truly matters—that safety isn’t just a form to fill out or a rule to follow—they are more likely to engage, speak up, and take ownership. A workplace where safety is woven into every decision and action not only prevents accidents but also builds trust, accountability, and pride in doing the job the right way.

CWT Training Academy's [IDDE and Spill Control Bundle](#), or the [STORM-E School](#) Spill Control and Response trainings can give you the skills you need to work safe in the field. Looking for more dialogue or a place to ask tough questions? Check out the [CWT Academy Safety Exchange](#), a moderated interactive community designed for safety professionals, managers, employees, and anyone passionate about creating safer workplaces.



ILDE AND SPILL CONTROL BUNDLE TRAINING

This on-demand course is designed to increase awareness and provide municipal field staff with the tools to detect different types of illicit discharges in the public storm sewer system.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- **Identify different types of illicit discharges**
- **Elevate awareness of private, commercial and industrial activity that may impact the stormwater system within a jurisdiction**
- **Provide tools to identify, report and investigate the sources of illicit discharges within a municipal system**
- **Steps to prevent illicit discharge**
- **Obtain an understanding of how to identify a spill, implement low risk prevention and clean up measures, and buy time for appropriate cleanup response**
- **Increase confidence to take action in case of a spill**
- **Short spill response demonstration available**

1 PDH



**REGISTER
NOW**

NORTHWEST SPILL KIT PROGRAM (NWSKP) SUCCESS



The Northwest Spill Kit Program addresses a critical municipal stormwater permit requirement: **demonstrating measurable behavior change in pollution prevention practices**. By providing businesses with spill response materials, hands-on training, and culturally competent outreach in six languages, the NWSKP creates a proactive partnership that prevents pollutants from entering stormwater systems before they become illicit discharge, detection, and elimination (IDDE) incidents.



Implemented across five Washington municipalities (Des Moines, Kirkland, Bellevue, Pacific, and Issaquah) from 2023-2025, the program served 800-1,200 businesses and **demonstrated that voluntary, education-based approaches can achieve substantial, documented behavior change supporting both source control and IDDE program goals**.

A recently completed 2025 Program Evaluation produced the following measured behavior change and cleanup results:

- Businesses actively using spill kits for real incidents **= 25.1%**
- Business that developed written spill response plans **= 61.5%**
- Businesses that maintain proper spill kits on site **= 41.3%**

Containment success rate for all 44 documented spill incidents **= 100%**!

Overall, the NWSKP prevented an estimated 200-400 gallons of pollutants annually from entering regional waterways, and reduced municipal emergency spill response burden and associated costs by an estimated \$19,100-\$25,800 from surveyed businesses alone. To find out more or order kits, call CWT at 206-227-5894.



Your Journey into the World of Stormwater Starts Here.

Every storm tells a story — and every stormwater professional plays a role in protecting how that story ends. Over the next several weeks, you'll meet the people, processes, and principles that make up the foundation of municipal stormwater management in **our new email-based STORM-E Spotlight Series.**

Each week, we'll shine a light on one of the 11 essential courses that make up the CWT Training Academy's STORM-E School — **a complete online training path designed to help you understand your MS4 permit, strengthen your compliance program, and protect your community's waterways.**

What you can Expect

Each email in this series will include:

- A featured course overview - what it covers and who it's for.
- Real-world takeaways and learning outcomes.
- A **Career Spotlight** highlighting a key stormwater role connected to that topic.
- Enrollment links and bundle savings for professionals who want to complete the full program.



From Erosion & Sediment Control to Stormwater Sampling, the STORM-E Series connects every element of compliance, giving you a 360-degree view of how great programs are built — and maintained.

Who it's for: Public Works teams, MS4 staff, inspectors, program coordinators, engineers, and **anyone responsible for municipal stormwater compliance or education.** Whether you're new to the field or deep in the details of your city's stormwater program, this series will help you see how each role, requirement, and routine contributes to cleaner, safer water for everyone downstream.

The Full Program: All 11 courses are part of **WUS0111 – The STORM-E School**, totaling 12.25 PDHs and offering a 20% bundle savings! Courses may be taken individually or as a complete professional development path.

Don't miss this - sign up for the CWT Mailing List today!



UPCOMING EVENTS

Trainings, conferences, fun, and other happenings to keep you in the know in 2025

We are booking our public, private, in-person, and virtual courses and trainings into **January 2026** now!
Reach out to info@cwtacademy.com
or visit cwtacademy.com
to check out all of our event offerings

Come See the Academy! [Register here!](#)

- CESCL Full Certification - January 28/29 - Salem, OR
- BMP Workshop - January 30, Salem, Oregon
- IECA Northeast Conference
November 3-5, Boston, Massachusetts
- Water Quality Technology Conference
November 9-13, Tacoma, Washington
- Clean Water Law & Enforcement Seminar
November 19-21, Nashville, Tennessee
- North American Water Loss Conference
December 2-4, Louisville, Kentucky
- NEBC Business & Environment Conference
December 9-10, Portland, Oregon

Other Events and Happenings



**Celebrate National
Stormwater Day
with some cool
new swag from
[PUDLEGear.com!](http://PUDLEGear.com)
Use code
STORMH20DAY
for 15% off**



SPECTRO'S SPOTLIGHT

SEA LIONS & COASTAL TRASH

Starting the first Monday of every month, **we'll be shining Spectro's Spotlight** – a weeklong educational series that runs Monday through Friday, exploring how stormwater affects different animal species and their habitats. Each month, Spectro will highlight a new featured creature to help us understand how what happens on land impacts life in the water.

This November, **Spectro's Spotlight focuses on sea lions** – playful coastal mammals that rest and feed near river mouths, exactly where stormwater discharges reach the sea. Follow along all week to learn how trash, plastics, and bacteria affect marine life and our own recreation along the coast.

Every Spotlight will include a free downloadable coloring or activity page, perfect for classrooms, youth groups, or families who want to bring stormwater awareness to life through creativity and science.

Join us each month for Spectro's Spotlight, **and discover how clean stormwater protects every creature** – from the sea lions of November to the next species in the spotlight!

Follow CWT Training Academy for this and other fun, useful, and educational content on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), and [LinkedIn](#)

