

**STORM WATER
SOLUTIONS**

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Get Swept Up in Sweeping



Street sweeping can be an effective—and exciting—storm water pollution solution. As the practice becomes more common, newcomers and veterans alike are encouraging its advancement with fresh ideas.

Some cities are equipping their street sweeping vehicles to be mobile research labs. Take San Francisco, for instance. Last year researchers there installed air quality sensing systems on sweepers to gather environmental data while simultaneously studying the potential for improving community involvement.

Anyone who parks in an active street sweeping zone, myself included, knows the headaches cleaning days can cause—racing against the clock to switch parking spaces, paying tickets, retrieving your car from an impound lot. Having dodged and suffered consequences for the good of water quality, we especially can appreciate the importance of citizen engagement. Good news: Many municipalities are trying new techniques to firmly uphold their end of the street sweeping bargain.

In Tacoma, Wash., route drivers carry business card-sized handouts that list street sweeping basics and contact information for inquiring passersby. Portland, Ore., hosts a Street Cleaning FAQ page on its city website to address everything from the program's purpose to its coverage and frequency.

The city of Minneapolis notifies households with listed phone numbers of next-day sweeping via an automated call the evening prior. Many cities—Denver, Boston and Huntington Beach, Calif., among them—have invited the public to sign up for similar e-mail or text message alerts. Also along the lines of scheduling, if more than two-thirds of residents on an Oakland, Calif., block sign a petition requesting a change, the city will consider it.

Another ahead-of-the-curve municipality, San Diego, shares street sweeping best practices research and future plans in this issue (see page 10).

To our government-affiliated readers: Adopt ideas from these innovators, test them out and make adjustments to meet your community needs. And for us all: As engaged citizens and storm water advocates, share program ideas and feedback with local leaders. Go ahead, get swept up in street sweeping. Creativity and flexibility will be the keys to the practice's continued evolution.

Caitlin Cunningham, managing editor
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What's on the Web

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www.estormwater.com



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