

Environmental effects of improper use of common roof cleaning products

Many storm drains lead to creeks, and anything put into those drains can affect aquatic life.

Bleach

Bleach (sodium hypochlorite) can cause fish kills and kill the other creatures that live there.

- It kills living cells, most often damaging fish's sensitive gills and the skin that covers their entire bodies.
- It causes fish to suffer from respiratory problems and may suffocate them.

It is especially harmful to invertebrates like mayfly and dragonfly nymphs and water striders.



Soap

Soap of all kinds, including laundry powder, are commonly used moss control products that can cause serious damage if they reach waterways.

Soaps and detergents:

- Can leave fish and other organisms starved for air by binding up oxygen to form bubbles, suffocating aquatic life.
- Lower water surface tension, making it hard for aquatic insects like water striders to float on the surface.
- Remove the protective waxes on insects causing them to die of excess water loss.



How to Remove Moss in an Environmentally Safe Way

Safely remove moss physically (i.e., scraping) or with an approved moss control product. If you choose to use a chemical, remember to:

- check the label before using;
- make sure it's approved for use specifically on roofs in Canada;
- confirm it has a registration number; and
- keep it from entering waterways.

More information can be found in the Home and Garden Pest Management Guide for B.C. (p. 9): <http://ow.ly/Y9Wx50JzExw>

A Pest Control Products Act registration number can be found on the label of any pesticide sold or used in Canada.

Look up product information related to the registration number here:
pest-control.canada.ca/pesticide-registry/en/index.html

Legislated Requirements

In addition to harming aquatic life, failing to follow environmentally safe practices for commercial roof cleaning goes against provincial and federal environmental regulations.

Provincial

Environmental Management Act

- Section 6(4) states that a “person must not introduce waste into the environment in such a manner or quantity as to cause pollution.”

Integrated Pest Management Act

- Section 3(2)(a) a person must not use a pesticide registered under the *Pest Control Products Act* for anything except what the pesticide is designated for under that act.
- Section 3(2)(b) a person must not use a pesticide not registered under the *Pest Control Products Act* unless the pesticide is used in a manner and for a purpose expressly allowed under that act.

More information on environmental compliance can be found here:

www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/research-monitoring-reporting/reporting/env-compliance-inspection-report

Federal

Environment Canada Fisheries Act or more specifically:

- ▶ www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-pollution/fisheries-act-registry.html
- ▶ www.canada.ca/en/environment-climate-change/services/managing-pollution/fisheries-act-registry/frequently-asked-questions.html

