



BMPs for Embalming Facilities

The embalming facilities Best Management Practices (BMP) Program is a program designed to address the discharge of preservation chemicals, blood and bodily fluids by the local business community into the sewer system. Because of this potential, the City-Parish may require the facilities to obtain an Industrial User Discharge Permit. The general permit is driven by the policies and BMPs found in this document.

Program Details and Documents

Required Best Management Practices:

- **Mix the smallest possible volume of embalming solution required to do the job effectively and minimize spills.** One-half to one gallon of embalming solution should be sufficient in most cases.
- **Use caution during dilution of embalming solution and filling of machines.** Use small quantities of chemicals for safe handling.
- **Perform preventative maintenance on embalming equipment.** Keep a maintenance log.
- **Store excess embalming solutions in approved, properly labeled containers for future use.**
- **Store embalming fluids and chemicals away from drains or in a secondary containment structure to prevent accidental spills from entering the sanitary sewer.**
- **Do not dispose solvents or chemicals containing chlorinated hydrocarbons into the sanitary sewer.** Follow appropriate procedures for all hazardous and non-hazardous chemicals. Properly separate, store, label, and dispose of all wastes. **Keep waste manifests on site for inspection.**

Suggested Pollution Prevention Practices:

- Use embalming fluid substitutes containing ethyl alcohol, polyethylene glycol and phenoxyethanol to replace embalming solutions containing formaldehyde, methanol, and phenol.
- Prevent discharge of concentrated embalming chemicals by rinsing empty chemical containers with water and emptying the rinse water into embalming machine for reuse.
- Develop procedures to contain spills, decontaminate work areas, and dispose of waste in areas where spills occur.
- Purchase pre-diluted solutions to eliminate spills during dilution of embalming solutions.
- Use minimal amount of solution or lower concentrations of hazardous chemicals (formaldehyde, phenol, etc.) in embalming solutions.

Resources:

JEA. "Best Management Practices for Embalming Facilities." JEA Pretreatment Program.
https://www.jea.com/About/Wastewater/Industrial_Pretreatment/Commercial_Best_Management_Practices/Embalming_Facilities.aspx

National Funeral Home Directors Associate. 1995. "Funeral Home Waste Stream Audit Report." June 9, 1995.

National Funeral Home Directors Associate. 2003 "Best Management Practices for Funeral Homes." January 2003.