The purpose of a municipal street sweeper program is twofold: maintain regulatory compliance and protect quality of life for residents. Federal and state governments have pollution regulations that municipalities must meet. The most familiar of these is the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit, which is also referred to as a Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit. The MS4 permit requires that entities work to prevent sediment, trash, and debris from entering waterways. By preventing these pollutants from entering the waterways, municipalities can protect their drinking water sources and keep costs associated with treating the drinking water down. Additionally, some municipalities must meet state and federal air pollution regulations. Street sweepers are used to meet both requirements by controlling dust and removing non-stormwater items from the roadway surface.

A street sweeper program is also used to protect the quality of life for residents. Street sweepers are used to keep the roadways clean. This in turn helps to promote economic development by creating an attractive place to live and work. The use of street sweepers also promotes walkability and usage of waterways for aquatic activities such as fishing and swimming.

There are four essential components of an effective street sweeping program:

- **Schedule:** At a minimum all roadways should be swept once per year. However, most municipalities develop a multi-level schedule such that areas with greater traffic are swept more frequently and residential areas once per year. Scheduling frequency will depend on the size of your municipality, the primary focus of the community, and your available resources. Additionally, route optimization and capacity of your street sweeper should be considered. Some entities find it more productive to schedule street sweeping to occur the day after garbage is collected for an area. An example of schedule frequency is:
  - Downtown, Central Business District and High Visitor Areas: Once every 1-2 weeks
  - Public Parking Lots: Once every 2-4 weeks
  - Arterial Roadways/Thoroughfares: Once every 2-4 weeks
  - Collectors: 3-6 times per year
  - Residential Roadways: 1-2 times per year
  - Municipal Construction Projects: As needed/requested to maintain a clean job site
  - Special Events such as Parades and Festivals: Before, after, and sometimes during an event as needed to minimize pollutants.

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• **Documentation:** Map your entire roadway system. This should include public parking areas and park roads. Keep a log, work order, or map of when the areas were last maintained and when they are next scheduled for maintenance. This should include the number of miles swept, and the volume of debris removed.

• **Disposal:** A disposal plan for all materials collected should be developed. The number of times a street sweeper will need to dump the collected load will depend on the size of the unit and the amount of debris it collects. If the sweeper collects industrial waste, then testing and disposal at a permitted facility may be required.

• **Equipment Maintenance:** The type of street sweeping equipment used will depend on the size of your municipality, types of applications, and available funding. Routine maintenance on the street sweeping equipment is essential to achieving pollutant removal to the maximum extent practicable.

Some additional components that can make a street sweeping program more effective are:

• **Time of Maintenance:** In order to achieve the maximum effectiveness, street sweeping may be conducted during non-typical hours. For instance, in commercial areas, street sweeping may be conducted early in the morning such that the activity is completed before the businesses open. In residential areas, it is easier to conduct sweeping services during the day when most of the residents are away from home.

• **Parking Policies:** Some municipalities have adopted No Parking Policies during set non-business hours. This allows the street sweeper to access the entire roadway while vehicles are not present.

• **Illicit Discharge Response:** Some municipalities have adopted standard operating procedures for responses to illicit discharges. This allows them to use a small street sweeper brush attachment on their maintenance equipment to clean up response materials after an illicit discharge. An example of this is sweeping up dry sweep that is used at the scene of an accident to soak up vehicle fluids.