**General Contractors**

General contractors oversee construction and often work with subs such as plumbers, painters, granite and stone installers, landscapers, cement, etc.

**Two websites for general information:**

* <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Dangerous-waste-guidance/Common-dangerous-waste/Construction-and-demolition>
* <https://archive.epa.gov/compliance/resources/publications/assistance/sectors/web/html/>

**Wastes that a general contractor may generate include:**

* Asbestos: regulated by clean air agencies and permit and certification are required to remove. Special disposal requirements. <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Dangerous-waste-guidance/Common-dangerous-waste/Asbestos>.
* Dust from grinding stone such as marble and stone.

<https://www.kingcounty.gov/services/environment/wastewater/industrial-waste/library/tech-assistance.aspx>. Scroll down for this document:

[A Guide to Waste Water Management at Marble & Granite Finishing Businesses in King County](https://apps.lhwmp.org/IRAC/eDoc.ashx?DocID=Ofk8pFc6WgU%3d), August 2008

Waste water management guidelines and regulations for marble and granite fabrication shops in King County.

Produced by King County Local Hazardous Waste Management Program and Interagency Resource for Achieving Cooperation.

* Note: if the link does not work, find the most current version of this guidance document by entering "granite" in the search of the [IRAC Publications database](https://apps.lhwmp.org/IRAC/Publications.aspx).
* Cement/concrete grinding and wash: the pH can get high. Can be treated with dry ice, but I need more information.
* Pressure treated wood: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Dangerous-waste-guidance/Common-dangerous-waste/Treated-wood-waste>.
* Adhesives, paints, solvents, paint strippers, degreasers, etc.
* Petroleum products, fuel and hydraulic oil.
* Fluorescent tubes
* Mercury switches/thermostats
* Contaminants released from power washing such as lead based paint, and solids released to storm.
* Contaminants not contained from sanding and grinding such as lead based paint, cement, stone, etc.
* Dirt/mud not contained on site and released to storm system.
* Aerosol cans
* Shop towels/wipes: <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Dangerous-waste-guidance/Common-dangerous-waste/solvent-wipes>

**Likely spills from:**

* Hydrualic lines/fuels
* Paint/solvents/chemicals
* Concrete wash

**The main problems come from uncontrolled job sites where demolition and construction take place. The solutions to these issues are to:**

* Hire licensed contractors work with and remove asbestos and lead based paint.
* Contain all power washing solutions, as well as dust or wash water from grinding and sanding activities.
* Follow regulations for preventing release of dirt/bare soil to storm system. Regularly sweep paved areas. Dirt, garbage, leaves, and other debris can wash into storm drains, contaminate stormwater and cause blockage during storms.
* **Always use the least toxic product for such tasks as cleaning, painting, and maintenance.** Consider not only the job at hand, but worker safety and disposal.
* **Properly store and dispose of chemicals, paints, solvents, cleaning agents, oils, fuels, pesticides, and other toxic materials. Keep out of reach of children and others who may want to tamper with them.** State regulations must be followed in disposing of hazardous materials, pesticides, and pesticide application equipment. Store as much material as possible inside and cover materials stored outside. Provide secondary containment where necessary.
* Store construction materials such as concrete, dry wall, dirt, and paint under a waterproof cover and away from storm drains. These materials are extremely harmful to fish and their habitat.
* Have spill kits on site and provide training.
* **Discuss disposal practices subs who work on the site**. Storm drains must never be used to dispose of paint, construction wastes, or cleaning waste water. Include appropriate language in work contracts to ensure a contractor’s responsibility to prevent illegal discharges. If necessary, block storm drains or provide an insert and then pump water to a mop sink or toilet. Spot clean paved areas rather than washing to prevent runoff of harmful chemicals, such as oils and grease.
* **Florescent Blub Disposal:** fluorescent bulbs must be recycled appropriately or disposed of as dangerous/hazardous waste.
* **Renovations if your building contains lead-based paint:** you must use a contractor certified to work with lead- based paint if the building was built before 1978. Properly contain and dispose of paint chips. <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Dangerous-waste-guidance/Common-dangerous-waste/Lead>. Lead based paint abatement requires additional certifications. <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/building-infrastructure/housing/lead-based-paint/lead-based-paint-program-lbpabatement/>.

**Other “Green” practices:**

* Recycling, salvage, and reuse of construction materials and debris
* Using low-toxic paints, adhesives, and finishes, to protect the user and environment
* Installing energy efficient and EnergyStar rated products
* Creative lighting design plans using lighting sensor controls and CFL’s