The OmniSource Recycling facility at 2453 Hill Avenue in Toledo, Ohio, has joined more than a dozen other scrap and salvage yards in Toledo’s Salvage & Stewardship program. With a grant from U.S. EPA Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI), the City of Toledo started this voluntary program in 2011 to help auto salvage and recycling yards take extra steps to protect local water quality. Auto salvage facilities, metal recycling operations, and scrap yards take up an estimated 184 acres of land within the city limits—many clustered within industrial areas near the Ottawa River and its watershed. The first goal of the Salvage & Stewardship program is to minimize contact of stormwater with contaminants such as petroleum products, metals, antifreeze, and mercury at scrap and salvage yard operations. The second goal is to treat contaminants that do contact stormwater on site using best management practices (BMP) in order to minimize contaminants in runoff that reaches the watershed.

OmniSource is committed to protecting stormwater at its Hill Avenue facility while providing a valuable recycling service to the community. This facility employs about 40 people and accepts 10 to 40 trucks per day of white goods (refrigerators, washers, dryers, water heaters, and other domestic and commercial appliances), as well as general nonferrous scrap metal from established accounts for processing. The facility also serves the public as a nonferrous collection center.

Daily OmniSource operations provide a high level of environmental protection and worker safety at the Hill Avenue facility. Comprehensive employee training and daily use of BMPs are effective in preventing water pollution. Examples of specific pollution prevention (P2) measures and BMPs utilized at the OmniSource facility are highlighted below. OmniSource implemented these BMPs and P2 measures at its own initiative to help achieve environmental compliance and to protect the Ottawa River watershed; these BMPs and P2 measures are also applicable at other scrap and salvage yards.
Inspections and Compliance Documentation
OmniSource conducts weekly and monthly inspections of the entire yard to identify operational and material storage and handling issues, as well as locations of possible leaks and spills. Any issues identified are documented in a database after each inspection. The database allows OmniSource to track issues and compliance problems, and ensures timely corrective action. Moreover, all annual environmental, safety, and other employee training is documented in the database to confirm that each employee is appropriately trained.

Signs and Labels
OmniSource operates a bright and clearly visible labeling and signage program that provides direction for employees. All operational areas that affect stormwater are labeled with clear directions or other information such as:

- Proper material and waste handling and storage methods
- Procedures in case of a spill or leak
- Locations of spill kits
- Locations of shut off valves for the stormwater conveyance system to contain any spill before it reaches the creek
Oil-Water Separators
OmniSource employs several oil-water separators throughout the site to remove oils from stormwater collected in the drainage system, particularly in areas prone to spills and leaks. For example, OmniSource washes oily and dirty scrap in an enclosed wash bay to contain the wash water. Because oil ends up in the wash water, OmniSource has added an oil water separator that removes the oils from the wash water before it is discharged to the storm drain system. The oil that is collected in the oil water separator is periodically cleaned out and recycled.

Paved Surfaces and Street Sweepers
The majority of the OmniSource site is paved to prevent contaminants infiltrating into the soil and trucks from dragging soil and contaminants into the streets. Stormwater collected from these paved areas is directed to oil-water separators located throughout the facility. In addition, OmniSource operates street sweepers within the facility to collect trash and other debris. When necessary, OmniSource can also call out street sweepers from their other local facilities to clean any dirt tracked onto the paved driveways and public streets.

Spill Response Kits
Spill response kits are located throughout the OmniSource facility, especially where spills and leaks can reach storm drains. Spill kits are also located near each stormwater outfall into the creek. The spill kits are clearly labeled and replenished as needed.
Absorbent Booms
As a precautionary measure, absorbent booms are placed at each stormwater outfall to the adjacent creek. The booms absorb any spills or oily discharges from the site, better protecting the creek. Booms can be purchased from a variety of on-line sources and are easy to install.

Site Access
A fence surrounds the entire OmniSource facility to provide security. Gates in the fencing are located at each stormwater outfall to the adjacent creek to allow quick and easy access in case of a spill or leak. Each gate is clearly marked with the outfall number and instructions to not block the gate.

For more information on the Toledo Salvage & and Stewardship program, contact the City of Toledo at:

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