



Sanitary Sewer System vs. Storm Sewer System

A sanitary sewer system and a storm sewer system are not the same. The sanitary sewer system pertains to the water that goes down a sink or other inside drains that flows to either a wastewater treatment plant or to a septic system for treatment. Storm sewer flows are not treated. The water that flows down driveways, streets, and other outside areas into a storm sewer or ditch and eventually flows into nearby lakes, creeks, and rivers is considered to be stormwater.



WHAT IS STORMWATER?

Stormwater is rain that falls on roofs or paved area like driveways and roads. It picks up chemicals and materials that are not naturally found in our waterways ie. fertilizers, cigarette butts, leaves, oil, soaps, etc. and carries them directly into the surrounding lakes and rivers.

Stormwater is separate from the sewage system, unlike wastewater, rainwater is not treated, and flows directly into the bodies of water that we use for swimming, fishing, and those that provide drinking water. Polluted runoff is the nation's greatest threat to clean water.



"THE DRAIN IS FOR THE RAIN!"

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WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

Rain washes pollutants from the streets and construction sites into storm sewers and ditches. Eventually, the polluted water from these systems get washed into streams and rivers with no treatment. This problem is known as stormwater pollution.

Stormwater pollution can have many adverse effects on creeks, rivers, lakes and water supplies as well as plants, fish, animals, and people.



Illicit Discharge

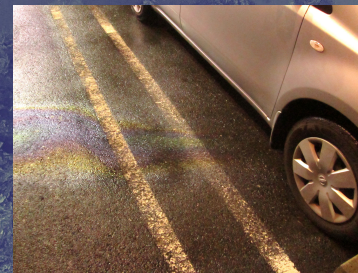
What is illicit discharge?

An illicit discharge is any discharge into a storm drain system that is not composed entirely of storm water.

Examples of illicit discharging:



Fertilizers & Pesticides



Vehicle Fluid Leaks












Loose Soil, Leaves, and Grass Clippings



Paint and Household Chemical Spills

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

Many routines activities that you perform at home can have significant negative impacts on our stormwater system. Through some of these simple at home measures, you can help protect our natural resources.

-  Sweep your gutters and driveways instead of hosing them down
-  Put leaves in the compost or the garden as mulch
-  Use commercial carwashes instead of washing your car in your driveway
-  Have routine maintenance performed on your cars to prevent leaks and properly dispose of fluids
-  Clean up pet waste
-  Use chemical pesticides as a last resort, know your pest, and narrowly target it
-  Do not apply fertilizers in excess or if rain is forecasted
-  Plant grass where soil is exposed and enclose your garden beds to contain soil and other substances
-  Properly dispose of hazardous household products