

**SPOKANE COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS**

**DIVISION OF
ENGINEERING & ROADS
STORMWATER UTILITY**

Good Housekeeping Practices

March 2009

Quick Facts

- Stormwater is the number one cause of water pollution in the country.
- One quart of used oil dumped into a storm drain can pollute a million gallons of water and create a slick the size of a football field.
- The U.S. loses 600 million tons of sediment per year. That is enough sediment to cover more than 400 football fields per day to a depth of 1 foot.

Glossary

Best Management Practices

Methods such as good housekeeping, spill prevention, or treatment measures to prevent or minimize pollutant discharges to the storm drain system.

Illicit Discharge

The discharge of non-stormwater to the storm drain system, thereby contributing to water pollution.

Storm-Drain System

Collects and transports rain and snowmelt via gutters, ditches, drywells, pipes, catch basins, etc., to prevent flooding in urban areas. Anything that flows or is discharged into the system goes directly to area streams, rivers, lakes, the aquifer, or other waters.

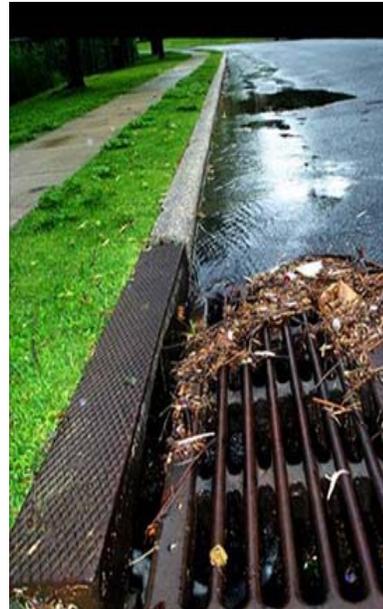
Urban Runoff

Rain and any other water that passes through and out of developed areas (streets, parking lots, roof tops, etc.) into the storm-drain system.

STORMWATER ISN'T JUST STORM WATER...

When we replace vegetated land with surfaces that water can not penetrate [such as streets, parking lots, and rooftops], rain water and snow melt no longer soaks into the ground but leaves the site as stormwater runoff. Stormwater washes along or dissolves materials in its path, becoming a transportation system for pollutants. Storm drains collect this stormwater runoff and carry it away to discharge points. Contrary to popular belief, most storm drains do not carry stormwater to wastewater treatment plants. Much of our stormwater eventually enters the underlying aquifer, a natural underground reservoir providing the drinking water to Spokane and surrounding areas.

Stormwater runoff can be a source of ground and surface water pollution. Stormwater contains sediments, metals (copper, cadmium, chromium, lead, zinc, etc.), nutrients (phosphorous and nitrogen), salts, petroleum products, food wastes, and coliform bacteria, to name a few. When introduced to our streams and lakes, these pollutants and debris prove toxic to plant and animal life, affect recreational activities such as boating and swimming, and can even increase flooding conditions.



Stormwater runoff eventually enters our rivers, lakes, and even the aquifer!

All residents and businesses can apply good housekeeping practices in their daily activities to reduce or eliminate stormwater pollution. The information on the reverse side of this page identifies some of these good housekeeping practices.

COMMON STORMWATER POLLUTANTS

| Pollutant | Source |
|---|---|
| Sediments - silt, sand, and clay | Construction sites; bare spots in lawns and gardens; wastewater from sediment and other debris; washing cars and trucks on driveways or parking lots; dirt roads and driveways; unprotected stream banks and drainageways |
| Nutrients | Fertilizers; pet waste; grass clippings and leaves left on streets and sidewalks; organics burned in ditches |
| Disease organisms | Pet and wildlife waste; garbage |
| Hydrocarbons | Car and truck exhaust; leaks and spills of oil and gas; used oil dumping; burning leaves and garbage |
| Pesticides | Overapplication of or application before a rainstorm; spills and leaks |
| Metals | Cars and trucks (brake and tire wear, exhaust); industrial activities, galvanized metal gutters and downspouts |

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We're on the Web!

[www.spokanecounty.org/
Stormwater](http://www.spokanecounty.org/Stormwater)

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES FOR GOOD HOUSEKEEPING

Storing Materials

- ✓ Place tight fitting lids on all containers.
- ✓ Check containers often for leaks or spills. Replace all bins and containers that are leaking, corroded, or otherwise deteriorating.
- ✓ Store containers in a manner that keeps leaks and spills from being washed into the storm-drain system.
- ✓ Store containers and materials inside a building, under a roof, or securely covered with a tarp to prevent contact with rain.



Dispose of liquid spills or waste properly, either in the trash or at the local hazardous waste collection site.

Preventative Maintenance

- ✓ Keep tools, equipment, and vehicles in good working condition.
- ✓ Regularly inspect equipment and vehicles for leaks (oil, radiator, transmission, etc.), and make repairs immediately.
- ✓ Use drip pans to catch leaks during maintenance activities.

Litter Control

- ✓ Pick up litter and waste daily, and dispose in trash receptacles.
- ✓ Prevent trash overflow by supplying adequate numbers of trash receptacles on site.

Waste Disposal

- ✓ Check dumpsters and trash receptacles regularly for leaks. Replace leaky or corroded dumpsters and trash receptacles immediately.
- ✓ Keep outside refuse container lids closed to keep rain out.
- ✓ Pick up and properly dispose of or compost leaves, grass clippings, and other yard waste.
- ✓ NEVER pour oil, antifreeze, paint, or any other toxic materials down the storm drain. Take them to approved hazardous waste collection sites.

Tool, Equipment, Vehicle, & Pavement Cleaning

- ✓ If possible, wash tools, equipment, and vehicles in a grassed area.
- ✓ Otherwise, discharge all wash water from paved areas to the sanitary sewer, a process treatment system, or holding tank.
- ✓ Sweep bare floors and paved areas often and dispose of the dirt and debris in the trash.
- ✓ Do not powerwash dirt, debris, or any other materials to the storm system.

Training (specifically for businesses)

For more information or assistance in implementing these best management practices, contact: Spokane County Public Works, Division of Engineering & Roads, Stormwater Utility at 509-477-3600.

