

Rivers & Streams Begin at Your Front Door



Even though you live miles from a river or stream, you may be polluting it without knowing it.

Before you pour anything into the gutter or down the drain, stop and think! Storm drains go directly into channels and creeks, rivers and streams.

Did You Know...

Anything we use in our home, car and business like motor oil, paint, pesticides, fertilizers and cleaners can wind up in the street.

A little water from rain or a garden hose can carry automotive and household materials through the storm drain, polluting streams, rivers, and wetlands. Storm drains are there to drain water off the street - not for disposal of hazardous materials.

Dumping one quart of motor oil down a storm drain contaminates 250,000 gallons of water.

Because storm drains are separate from our sewer system, Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution can flow into streams and rivers without treatment.

Where Does It Go?

These pollutants flow together on a journey from the storm drain to ditches, creeks, rivers, streams and wetlands. This type of pollution is called Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution and is a serious threat to the rivers and streams of Illinois.

What Is Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution?

Storm water runoff refers to seasonal rainfall flows. It is very noticeable during a heavy rain storm when large volumes of water drain off paved areas. Urban runoff can happen anytime of the year when excessive water use from irrigation, car washing and other sources carries litter, lawn clippings and other urban pollutants into storm drains. Even an automobile leaking motor oil miles from a river or stream can cause pollution.

How Is It Different From Other Forms of Water Pollution?

Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution can include anything that washes into the storm drain from the community. Unlike water pollution linked to factories or sewage treatment plants, Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution can come from city streets, neighborhoods, farms, construction sites and parking lots.

Where Does Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution Come From?

- Automotive leaks and spills
- Improper disposal of used oil and other engine fluids down the storm drain
- Metals found in vehicle exhaust, weathered paint, rust, metal plating and tires
- Pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers from lawns, gardens and farms
- Improper disposal of cleaners, paint and paint removers
- Soil erosion and dust debris from landscape and construction activities
- Litter, lawn clippings, animal waste and other organic matter
- Oil stains on parking lots and paved surfaces

Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution and Our Rivers and Streams

Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution may have a serious impact on water quality in Lake Bluff. Pollutants from the storm drain system can harm aquatic life as well as wetland habitats. It can also degrade recreation areas such as beaches, fishing areas, and boating areas.

A Storm Water Quality Management Program has been developed by the Village of Lake Bluff, which participates in the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). Lake Bluff's responsibilities involve encouraging the public to help protect water quality, monitoring runoff in the storm drain system, investigating illegal disposals and maintaining storm drains.

The support of Lake Bluff residents, businesses and industries is needed to improve water quality and reduce the threat of Storm Water & Urban Runoff Pollution. Proper use and disposal of materials we use everyday will help stop this form of pollution before it reaches the storm drain and our rivers and streams.

To report possible illegal discharges to the storm drain system, call the *Village of Lake Bluff at 847-234-0774.*

(Source: Orange County, California)