City of Dallas
Public Works and Transportation
Storm Water Management Section
Quarterly Newsletter Winter 2003/2004 Edition

Who Are We?

The Storm Water Management Section is the operator of the City's Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) permit under the Environmental Protection Agency's National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System program.

Under its MS4 permit, the City is authorized to discharge storm water through its storm drain system into the waters of the United States in accordance with the City's Storm Water Management Program, which has specific requirements to control and monitor the quality of the storm water.

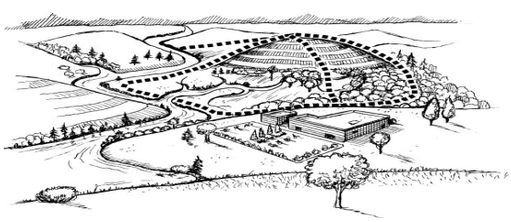
The storm drain system discharges directly into the creeks, lakes and the Trinity River, unlike the sanitary sewer system which discharges into the wastewater treatment plants. When it rains, the storm water carries a lot of pollutants, sediment and debris through the storm drain system directly into the creeks, lakes and the Trinity River. In an effort to make our storm water cleaner, our program includes the following:

- Storm water quality monitoring
- Educating the public, including school children, on storm water pollution prevention
- Educating the construction industry and all other industries in Dallas on storm water permitting requirements, and storm water pollution prevention
- Enforcing storm water laws and regulations

How can you help prevent Storm Water Pollution?

Protect Your Watershed!

Everyone lives in a watershed. It is the area of land that catches rain and snow, which then drains into a common body of water. The body of water could be a stream, creek, lake or river.



Homes, farms, ranches, forests, small towns, big cities and more can make up a watershed. Some watersheds cross county, state, and even international borders. Watersheds come in all shapes and sizes. A watershed can be small or large, depending on the size of the drainage area under consideration. In a city, the gutters that run along the curb on your street are the first part of your neighborhood's drainage system. The water in the gutters, which drain the small watershed of your neighborhood, flows into the storm drain system and empties into a nearby stream. The stream, which receives storm water drainage from streets from several neighborhoods, is part of a larger watershed. That stream in turn flows into a larger stream or river. This means that pollution in any watershed can affect the quality of the receiving water body.

Prevent Yard Waste From Polluting Our Water Ways

In the fall and winter season, fallen leaves and other yard waste get blown into the streets and eventually end up in the storm drain system at the first rain event. This significantly impacts the quality of the water, because unlike sanitary sewers, anything dumped into the storm drain system flows directly into the nearest lake, stream, creek or river without any treatment to remove contaminants.

What can you do to minimize fallen leaves and other yard waste from polluting our waterways?

- Don't dump fallen leaves and other yard waste into the inlets, storm drains or on creek banks.
- Clean up fallen leaves and other yard waste that reach the street to keep it out of the storm drain system.
- Use a mulching mower or a mulching blade and leave grass clippings on the lawn as fertilizer.
- Use fallen leaves as winter or summer mulch or shred them and leave them on the lawn.
- Clean up and reuse granular lawn care products that fall on the streets, sidewalks and driveways.
- Rake grass clippings and fallen leaves into plastic bags and dispose as bulk trash.
- Pick up pet waste. Bacteria from pet waste are a serious threat to the quality of our water.

Is there a better alternative for homeowners to dispose of their fallen leaves and other yard waste?

- Yes! Composting is a safe and environmentally sound method of managing fallen leaves and other yard waste. Proper composting does not cause health or fire hazards and, it can be beneficial to gardens and lawns. Composting is a simple process that involves placing yard waste and other organic materials in a pile or bin, maintaining adequate moisture, and turning the pile periodically to mix in air. Microorganisms gradually break down the yard waste into a humus-like product called compost.

What are the benefits of composting?

- It helps reduce soil compaction and erosion.
- It helps retain soil moisture and nutrients as well as increases soil fertility.
- It serves as an organic fertilizer for the soil.
- It helps save landfill space.

Keep Fats, Oils and Grease Out of the Storm Drainage System

Holidays and other special occasions are often celebrated with family dinners. As you prepare your meals and dispose of food waste, please keep the following do's and don't's in mind.

Do!

- Put oil and grease in covered collection containers and dispose of them properly.
- Scrape food scraps from dishes into trashcans and garbage bags and dispose of properly. Avoid using your garbage disposal.
- Remove oil and grease from dishes, pans, fryers, and griddles. Cool first before you skim, scrape, or wipe off excess grease.
- If you generate small amounts of used cooking oil, reuse it as often as possible then pour it into a covered container that you can throw away.
- Start a compost pile at your home with food scraps that are not meat.
- If you generate large amounts of used cooking oil, reuse or recycle it. To find a recycler, check the phone book under "recyclers" or "rendering companies."

Don't!

- Don't pour fats, oil and grease down the storm drain inlets.
- Don't pour fats, oils and grease in the alleys or near the street because they will eventually end up in the storm drainage system.
- Don't dispose of food scraps in the storm drain inlets.
- Don't dispose of food scraps in the alley, or near the street because they will eventually end up in the storm drainage system.

Reasons Why You Should Help!

- To prevent grease buildup from blocking the storm drainage system.
- To stop sanitary sewer overflows into streets and storm drainage system
- To save money spent on costly cleanups of sewage spills.
- To reduce the number of times the storm drain system is cleaned.
- To protect the quality of our water.

Contact Us

If you see someone illegally dumping anything into the storm drains, please call 311. If you are interested in the Storm Water Management Section making a presentation to your organization about recycling, storm water pollution prevention or storm water permitting requirements, please call us at 214-948-4022.

For more information, log on to our Web site at www.dallascityhall.com/dallas/eng/html/storm_water_management.html, or let your children visit www.trinity-trudy.org.

Publication No. 03/04-13

City of Dallas
Public Works and Transportation
Storm Water Management Section
320 E. Jefferson Blvd., Room 308
Dallas, Texas 75203

affix addresses

label here