

Separate Sewer and Stormwater *Fact Sheet*

WATER POLLUTION

Sources of water pollution like industrial wastes from factories have been greatly reduced in recent years. Now, more than 60% of water pollution comes from things like runoff from homes, excess fertilizer, and pet waste. All these sources add up to a big pollution problem. So, believe it or not, the biggest source of water pollution today is not industry— it is actually households like yours. But each of us can do small things to help clean up our water. And it starts with realizing that our sewers and storm systems are separate— what goes into the storm drains flows directly into the environment, untreated.



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What's The Problem With Dumping Stuff Down Storm Drains?

Doesn't it all get treated anyway? **NO!** The storm system and wastewater systems are separate. What goes down the toilet goes to the wastewater treatment plant, where the water is processed and cleaned before being released back into our waterways. What goes down the storm drain flows directly into our environment. Storm water pollution is any harmful substance that enters into the storm water sewer system. As storm water flows (or snow melts), it picks up debris, chemicals (like pesticides and fertilizers), dirt, cigarette butts, and other pollutants. These pollutants enter the storm sewer system and are discharged into a lake, stream, river, or wetland mainly due to our own negligence and carelessness with common pollutants. So the moral of the story is this: *If it's on the ground, it's in your water.*

Facts And Figures

- Today, nonpoint source (NPS) pollution remains the nation's largest source of water quality problems. Nonpoint source pollution is generated by all of us, a product of millions of actions that we take each day, including activities such as applying pesticides, fertilizing our lawns, or the manner in which we dispose of oil.

What YOU Can Do

How can you help keep our waters clean?

- Don't dump anything into storm drains. This is a violation! Storm drains lead directly into our area waterways.
- Report a polluter: If you see someone dumping illegally into storm drains or water bodies, report it right away.
- Volunteer to help mark the storm drains in your neighborhood. These markers (like the one shown to the right) help deter people from dumping pollutants down the drain. We will provide you with the decals and the tools. Contact us at 673-6297 if you are interested in helping. Our goal is to get every storm drain in Webb City marked. We need your help.

