

How can I help prevent discharges into storm drains?

- Use pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers **sporadically** and away from storm drains and ditches.
- **Do not** pour household cleaners, oil, antifreeze, paint, etc... on driveways, streets, or into storm drains and ditches. Take them to collection centers.
- **Do not** blow leaves, grass clippings & mulch into storm drains. Compost away from storm drain.
- **Pick up** litter and trash near storm drains or streams.
- **Do not** store or expose materials to rain that could “wash-off” into storm drains or streets.
- **Check** if sewer laterals from rest rooms, kitchen and laundry room are connected to storm drains. If so, reconnect to sanitary sewer.
- **Check** if septic tank flow is entering storm drains. If so, correct the situation.

Prepared by:



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What are some typical illicit discharges and improper disposals that should be reported?

- Oil and antifreeze
- Paint
- Household cleaners
- Grass clippings and leaves
- Pesticides
- Herbicides
- Fertilizers
- Dirt and mulch
- Vehicle wash water
- Power wash water
- Sanitary sewer
- Pet wastes
- Trash and garbage
- Swimming pool water

If you see someone disposing any of the above illicit discharges into a storm drain, ditch, or channel, report it to the ‘hotline’ or other numbers listed below.

Action Center Hotline

311

Environmental Enforcement

204-7204

ADEM Mobile Branch

450-3400

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Illicit Discharges & Improper Disposals



What are illicit discharges and improper disposals?

Facts and Figures

Illicit Discharge Exemptions

Help prevent discharges

What to report?



Storm Water Management
Educational Series
FY 2012-2013

What are Illicit Discharges & Improper Disposals?

An Illicit Discharge or Improper Disposal is any discharge that is not composed entirely of rain water and that causes a risk to human health and safety, land or water.

What are examples of Illicit Discharges/Improper Disposals?

- Spilled chemicals
- Paint, used oil and antifreeze
- Pet wastes, lawn/yard trimmings
- Construction material, dirt
- Exposed material runoff
- Household chemicals
- Sanitary sewage

Ordinance/Enforcement

The City of Mobile has a Litter Ordinance which makes it illegal to litter or throw trash on streets or rights-of-way. If observed by a police officer, significant fines (up to \$432) can be imposed.

The City of Mobile also has a Storm Water Ordinance that makes it illegal to discharge illicit into storm water. An illicit discharge detection and elimination (IDDE) program has been implemented to identify, monitor, trace and inspect illicit discharges to storm water drains, ditches, creeks, etc... The ordinance allows the city to enforce removal and/or remediation of illicit discharges as well as fine owners, operators or responsible parties.

Illicit Discharges and Improper Disposals Facts and Figures

During and after rainstorms, pollutants on the surface are washed into our storm sewers. These storm sewers carry rainwater, along with pollutants, into streams and rivers. Pollutants degrade our water quality and are harmful to the environment and to humans.

Eliminating illicit discharges and improper disposals into storm water can reduce pollution of our waterways.

- A study in 1990 estimated that **40%** of do-it-yourself oil changes (amounting to 80 million gallons per year) were poured onto roads, driveways, yards or into storm sewers.
- Another study found **83%** of do-it-yourself antifreeze changes were flushed directly into storm drains or streets.
- Storm Drains collect rainwater from driveways, roads & yards and directly transport to streams. They **DO NOT** go to a treatment plant and get treated before discharge like sanitary sewer water.
- Anything you put in a storm drain ends up in a creek, river or water body — where you swim and fish.
- One quart of oil can contaminate up to **2 million gallons** of drinking water.

What non-storm water discharges are exempt or conditionally exempt from being considered Illicit Discharges and Improper Disposals?

Exempt:

- Diverted stream flows
- Rising ground waters
- Uncontaminated groundwater infiltration
- Springs
- Flows from riparian habitats and wetlands
- Flows from fire fighting activity

Conditionally Exempt:

- Water Line Flushing
- Landscape irrigation
- Un-contaminated pumped ground water
- Discharges from potable water sources
- Foundation drains
- Air conditioning condensation
- Irrigation water
- Water from space crawl pumps
- Footing drains
- Lawn watering
- Individual residential car wash
- De-chlorinated swimming pool discharges