

What Is An "Illicit Discharge"?

Federal regulations define an illicit discharge as "...any discharge to an MS4 that is not composed entirely of stormwater..." with some exceptions. Some of the pollutants that are considered "illicit" because MS4s are not designed to accept, process, or discharge such non-stormwater wastes are:

- Car wash wastewater
- Gas and motor oil
- Grass clippings
- Household cleansers
- Paints
- Pesticides
- Pet Waste
- Solvents
- Weed killer

Sometimes these pollutants are carried through the storm drainage system by rain, wind, or improper disposal into the local lakes, ponds and then into the Indian River Lagoon. This can result in serious health and water quality problems. These illicit discharges can also cause problems for wildlife and the overall appearance of the waterways. Storm drains in Edgewater are not connected to the city's sewer system; this means everything that goes into the storm drains goes to the local lakes, ponds and then into the Indian River Lagoon.



Why Are Illicit Discharge Detention and Elimination Efforts Necessary?

Discharges from MS4s often include wastes and wastewater from non-stormwater sources. A study conducted in 1987 in Sacramento, California, found a local MS4 was not directly attributable to precipitation runoff. A significant portion of these dry weather flows were from illicit and/or inappropriate discharges and connections to the MS4.

Illicit Discharges enter the system through direct connections (e.g., wastewater piping either mistakenly or deliberately connected to the storm drains) or indirect connections (e.g., infiltration into the MS4 from cracked sanitary systems, spills collected by drain outlets, or paint or used oil dumped directly into a drain.) The result is untreated discharges that contribute high levels of pollutants, including heavy metals, toxics, oil and grease, solvents, nutrients, viruses, and bacteria to receiving waterbodies. Pollutant levels from these illicit discharges have been shown in EPA studies to be high enough to significantly degrade receiving water quality and threaten aquatic, wildlife, and human health.

Six Easy Ways That You Can Keep Illicit Discharges Out of Our Waterways

There are simple ways that we can all do to help keep illicit discharges out of our waterways. It is up to YOU, the homeowner and business owners who call Edgewater home, to clean it up and to help keep it clean!

1. Used Oil, Antifreeze, and Batteries can be recycled. Clean up any spills immediately using kitty litter or sawdust as the absorbent, then sweep and dispose of properly.
2. Wash your car on the grass so the water, detergent, and dirt will be filtered by the soil. Better yet, take your car to a commercial car wash, where the dirty water is sent to the wastewater treatment plant.
3. Empty containers of household cleansers, pesticides, and weed killer should be disposed of according to label directions.
4. Grass clippings in the street should be swept up after each mowing. Grass clippings left in the street are being washed down into the storm drainage system through the swales, ditches and end up in the local lakes, ponds, and then in the Indian River Lagoon where they have the potential to cause algae blooms.
5. Many household products, including paints, paint thinners, and solvents can be taken to the Volusia County drop off sites (East side of County is usually done 2 times a year in New Smyrna Beach) or to the Volusia County Landfill located on Tomoka Farms Road, Port Orange, FL. The Landfill also offers a paint exchange where residents can drop off or take paint located at the Landfill. This is a great way to help others or to save money for you by utilizing the free paint exchange. Paint brushes used with water based paint can be rinsed in the sink. If you have a small amount of leftover paint in the can, you can let the paint dry out completely, then dispose of it in your garbage.
6. Remember to Stop "Poo"llution by Scooping the Poop! When walking your pet use a bag or a scooper to clean up your pet's waste. In order to keep animal waste from contaminating our community, anyone who owns a pet should properly dispose of waste by picking it up while walking or in your own backyard, wrapping it, and then placing into the trash or flushing if UNWRAPPED!

How to Prevent Stormwater Pollution in the Workplace

There are three general principles to remember:

1. Keep water from contacting work areas

Work areas can be contaminated by raw materials, process liquids, grease, oily wastes, heavy metals, and miscellaneous fluids. Work areas include surfaces used for shipping, for storing outdoor equipment and materials, and for maintaining vehicles. "Run-on stormwater" is water that flows across the working area. It picks up contaminants as it flows. If that water reaches a storm drain or ditch, those contaminants will be discharged to the City's stormwater system. To keep from discharging contaminated stormwater, you need to keep water from flowing across these contaminated areas and running into the stormwater system. For example:

- Keep run-on stormwater from contacting any industrial areas, either indoors or out.
- Install roofs or move industrial operations indoors to keep rain from falling onto work areas.
- Avoid practices like hosing down outdoor areas or washing commercial vehicles where the dirty water will enter the stormwater system.

2. Keep contaminants off surfaces that will come into contact with water

First, carefully look over your worksite to identify all areas that might contact stormwater or other water that is discharged to the stormwater system. Then, take special care to keep contaminants off these areas:

- Control all leaks and spills, even minor ones.
- Take a close look at your operating routines and your equipment to see whether any substances are exposed to stormwater that don't need to be.
- Try to minimize the use of pesticides and herbicides (weed and insect killers). If you must use them, make sure you are using the right product in the right amount, follow all label instructions, and dispose of empty containers properly.

3. Educate workers about preventing stormwater pollution

The first two principles won't work unless your employees are properly trained. Employees need to understand that improper disposal of materials into the stormwater system will pollute the Indian River Lagoon and could result in penalties. People often do better if they understand why they are being asked to change their work methods/habits. Install signs to inform and remind your employees. For example:

- Proper equipment washing procedures at designated washing areas
- "Close the cover" signs at dumpsters and other storage areas
- Reminders to not "top-off" or overfill fuel tanks
- Reminders to properly store your chemicals

Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why is it bad to wash my car at home on my driveway?

A: When you wash your car on your driveway there is no filtration system between your car and your storm drainage system. Thus, anything you use to wash your car runs straight into the street, down the storm drainage system and then into our local waterways. If you wash your car at home make sure to wash it in your grass, this way the water, detergent, and the dirt will all be filtered by the soil.

Q: Why is it better to wash my car at a commercial car wash?

A: Commercial car washes are required to have everything washed down the drain which is connected to the City's wastewater treatment plant. This means no soapy water goes directly into our waterways.

Q: I don't understand-aren't the storm drains connected to the City's sewer system?

A: No. It is an entirely separate pipe, and there really is NO filter between what enters the storm drains/catch basin and what drains directly into our waterways.

Q: What should I use to scoop the poop?

A: The best bag to use is a biodegradable/compostable bag, but any bag will work. Examples: commercial pet waste bags, sandwich bags, or the newspaper bag all work and can be placed in your household garbage.

Q: Why can't I compost my dog's poop?

A: Pet waste is full of harmful bacteria. You do NOT want to mix bad bacteria into you household compost. Play it safe and throw the waste in the garbage.

Q: I only have one small dog; will it really make a difference if I don't scoop the poop?

A: Yes; even a small amount of pet waste can contain many harmful parasites and bacteria which can contaminate our waterways.

Q: What do I do with my cat waste?

A: Scoop out the waste from your kitty litter, bag it, and throw it in the garbage or flush it without any bag or wrapper. Do NOT Flush kitty litter!

Q: How should you fertilize your yard?

A: Check out the "How to Fertilize Like A Floridian" on the Environmental Services Alert Page on the City of Edgewater Website at www.CityofEdgewater.org

Q: How should I water my yard?

A: Make sure to obey the watering restrictions if using potable water. If you are using reclaimed water we ask that you refrain from watering between the hours of 10am and 4pm.



THE DRAIN IS JUST FOR RAIN

REPORT WATER POLLUTION

NO SUDS—NO PAINT—NO OIL

EDGEWATER ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

386-424-2400 EXT 4007

Some of this information was provided by United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)