

- Encourage active citizen participation in stormwater protection and public group education on stormwater quality.
- Prevent sewage overflows to the streams by diverting gutter drains away from the sanitary sewer system. Report any overflows to the Town of Collierville Engineering Department.

**Common contributions to stormwater pollution:**



- Vehicle drips and leaks (oil, grease, gasoline, antifreeze, brake fluid) - particularly on paved areas.
- Overuse of lawn fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides.
- Pet wastes and food wastes - particularly on paved areas - allows harmful bacteria and viruses into natural creeks.
- Incorrect disposal of paints, solvents, cleaning fluids and other chemical agents.

*For more information about Stormwater Pollution, contact the Engineering Division:*

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# Stormwater Pollution Prevention

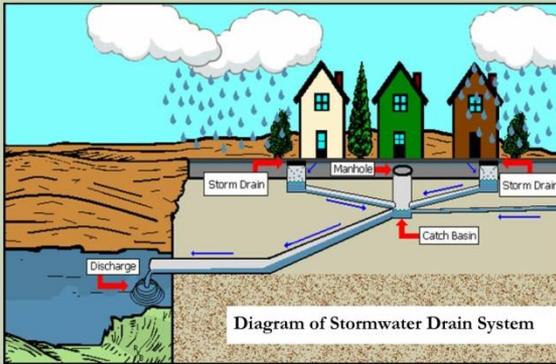
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*Your community for family living.*

*Cover photo courtesy of Kristen O'Connor*

# What You Should Know About Stormwater

## WHAT IS STORMWATER?

Stormwater is water from precipitation that flows across the ground and pavement due to rain or snowmelt (also known as stormwater runoff). The water may seep into the ground or flow into the Town stormwater drainage system. This system includes road-side gutters, ditches, streams, ponds and drainage pipes throughout the Town. All Town runoff goes into our natural streams: the Wolf River or Nonconnah Creek.



The natural streams have a small amount of baseflow that is caused by groundwater recharge and high water tables; the baseflow is relatively clean. When it rains, the baseflow is supplemented by stormwater runoff from parking lots and city streets. The baseflow is relatively clean groundwater that flows at a low velocity. Stormwater runoff tends to pickup garbage, debris, sediment, chemicals, automobile fluids and other pollutants; stormwater runoff is relatively dirty and will harm the fish and other wildlife living in the natural creeks.



Storm drains contain runoff that is not treated by the Town of Collierville prior to entering our natural streams. Sanitary sewers, however, convey wastewater from houses, businesses and industries to wastewater treatment plants. Storm drains are a completely different system than the sanitary sewers. Storm drains may travel anywhere from a few hundred feet up to several miles in underground pipes before being discharged.



## WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Stormwater can pick up debris, chemicals, dirt, and other pollutants and flow into a storm sewer or directly into lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, or coastal water. Anything that enters the storm drain system is discharged untreated into the waterbodies. The result of unclean stormwater runoff discharges is the loss of fish and aquatic wildlife as well as signs that state “no fishing” or “no swimming.”

## WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF POLLUTION?

Polluted stormwater runoff can have many effects on plants, fish, animals and people:

- Sediment can cloud the water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow. Sediment also can destroy aquatic habitats.
- Excess nutrients can cause algae blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can't exist in water with low dissolved oxygen levels.



- Bacteria and other pathogens can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards.
- Debris—plastic bags, six-pack rings, bottles and cigarette butts—washed into waterbodies can choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic life like ducks, fish, turtles, and birds as well as cause flooding.
- Household hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, used motor oil, and other auto fluids can poison aquatic life. Land animals and people can become sick or die from eating diseased fish and shellfish or ingesting polluted water.
- Polluted stormwater may affect drinking water sources. This, in turn, can affect human health and increase drinking water treatment costs.



## WHAT CAN I DO?



The best way to protect stormwater runoff quality is to avoid polluting in the first place. Conserve and recycle resources such as newspapers, plastic containers, glass jars, and metal cans.

- Practice street sweeping, picking up litter, and disposing of leaves and yard waste.
- Keep grass clippings, leaves, and lawn care, automotive and household chemicals out of the storm drain system. Participate in local garbage and debris pickup days, and recycle household hazardous waste materials to prevent storm drain contamination.

