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Dumping into storm drains is not just wrong, it's illegal.

Storm water, or rain water, flows into the storm drains you see at street corners or into roadside ditches.

Unlike the water that flows down the drains inside your home which goes to sewage treatment facilities, the storm drain system is completely separate; water in the storm drain receive no treatment or filtering process. This means that any pollution that gets washed into the storm drains go directly to our creeks, rivers, bayous and ultimately Galveston Bay. Examples of common storm water pollution come from construction debris, material stockpiles, automotive fluids, erosion, paint, pesticides, litter or any other industrial, construction and household materials. So be sure to keep all work areas clean and sweep up litter and debris. Cover storage and dumpsters and clean them regularly to avoid leaks. And install silt fences and other erosion controls where needed and properly maintain them especially after rainstorms.

Remember, it's illegal to dump or discharge waste or pollution into storm drains! So do the right thing and make keeping storm water clean part of your job.

Clean water is your business too. Here's why.



Vehicles can leak fuel, oil and other harmful fluids that can be picked up by storm water that flows into our waterways poisoning fish and shellfish. Sediments from erosion can cloud the water, suffocating fish and blocking the light needed for water plants to survive. Industrial and commercial activities with uncovered outdoor storage or process areas, loading docks and equipment maintenance and washing areas may also contribute pollutants to urban runoff. Bacteria and chemicals can wash into swimming areas and create health hazards, and sometimes even close beaches. Polluted storm water can also affect drinking water sources.

By using simple good housekeeping practices around your work sites and abiding by state and local storm water regulations and ordinances, business owners and employees can help minimize non-point source pollution that can enter our local waterways. Failure to do so can result in civil or criminal penalties including jail time, and/or fines.

The choice is clear. And you can do your part to help.

We all have a part to play in keeping our waterways clean. By understanding the problems and following the City of Houston's and Harris County's guidelines, you can decrease storm water pollution, help clean up our waterways and ensure a brighter future for us all.

At work sites, here are a few simple things you can do to help:

- Keep oils, solvents and other hazardous fluids under cover and away from the street and storm drains
- Use silt fences or similar products to prevent erosion and keep loose soil and sand out of street gutters
- Never discharge wastewater to the ground or storm drains
- Wash vehicles or equipment in wash bays and never wash off detergents, oils and greases into streets or storm drains
- Divert storm water away from exposed areas of the construction site
- Rinse out concrete trucks at a designated washout area
- Spills are required under Federal, State, and County law to be reported, so report any chemical spill to one of these agencies.
- Most of all - Never throw anything down a storm drain
- Educate your workforce! Call us for literature we'll be glad to help!



Get informed and get involved!

Clean water is all about prevention and being aware of behaviors that can lead to storm water pollution. Storm Water Educational Materials have been produced with helpful hints on how to follow Best Management Practices (BMPs) that can help business owners and employees fulfill Storm Water requirements. You may find these materials and learn more about City ordinances and County regulations on our website at www.cleanwaterclearchoice.org.

