

Stormwater Management Program

Background

According to the EPA, storm water pollution is the number one cause of water pollution in the country. Automotive chemicals, pesticides, fertilizers, pet wastes, soil erosion and sedimentation all contribute to water pollution. In 1990, the Environmental Protection Agency established the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). As a Non Standard MS4 permittee, TSD has identified outfalls that could be impacted by pollutants entering the storm water system, as required by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment. Our stormwater Management Program includes six specific elements:

- Public Education and Outreach about Stormwater
- Public Participation/Involvement
- Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination
- Construction Site Runoff Control
- Post-Construction Runoff Control
- Pollution Prevention/Good Housekeeping

What is storm water and storm water runoff?

Storm water originates from any storm event including rain, hail, and snow. Storm water runoff occurs when precipitation flows over impervious (paved) surfaces. Impervious surfaces like driveways, sidewalks, parking lots, and streets prevent storm water from naturally soaking into the ground. The storm water flows into storm sewer inlets located on and around school property.

How do pollutants affect the environment?

- ✓ Dirt and sediment cloud water and make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to grow.
- ✓ Excess nutrients from fertilizers can cause algal blooms. When algae die, they sink to the bottom and decompose, removing oxygen from the water. Low oxygen levels make it impossible for fish and other aquatic organisms to exist.
- ✓ Litter such as 6 pack rings, trash and cigarette butts can be washed into water bodies and choke, suffocate, or disable aquatic wildlife.
- ✓ Hazardous wastes like insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, and used motor oil can poison aquatic life. These chemicals can cause people to become sick or die from eating diseased fish.
- ✓ Many detergents contain phosphates. The chemical compounds cause an increase in plant (algae) growth in waters. This increase in growth can reduce oxygen for fish and increase pathogens in the water we drink.
- ✓ Antifreeze contains ethylene glycol. This substance can harm the kidneys in animals and humans. Just ¼ to 2 ounces of this substance can be lethal to cats and dogs.

Why should I be concerned about storm water?

As storm water travels over impervious surfaces it can collect pollutants. Storm water can pick up debris, chemicals, and sediment on the ground, which then enters lakes, streams, creeks and rivers via the storm sewer systems. Thus, anything that enters a storm sewer system is discharged into untreated bodies of water that we use for recreation and drinking water supplies.

Ways to keep pollutants from entering the stormwater system

1. Put trash in trash cans and secure the lids after use.
2. Sweep up litter, leaves, and debris from paved surfaces.
3. Pick up pet waste. Pet waste contains pollutants that can contaminate surface waters.
4. Wash vehicles at a car wash. Car washes drain to a water treatment plant, while driveways drain to catch basins which empty into creeks and rivers.
5. Never allow oil, antifreeze, soaps, gasoline, or solvents to flow down storm drains.
6. Repair leaks from vehicles. Recycle oil, antifreeze and other fluids at approved locations.
7. Monitor construction activities to make sure controls are being followed to prevent discharges into storm water inlets.
8. Apply fertilizers and pesticides according to label instructions and prevent runoff to storm drains.
9. Avoid over-watering after application of chemicals.
10. Check weather forecasts for heavy rain events prior to applying chemicals.
11. Do not pour water from carpet cleaning, trash cans, or mop buckets onto parking lots or into storm sewers. These waste waters should only be dumped into approved floor drains or mop sinks.
12. Use stencils or decals to mark storm drains for easy identification.
13. Dispose/recycle hazardous wastes according to local, state, and federal regulations.
14. Report and spills, dumping or suspicious substances near a culvert or storm drain immediately to the Environmental Specialist at (970) 613-5381. For after-hours concerns, call (970) 613-5010.

REMEMBER – ONLY RAIN DOWN THE STORM DRAIN!