

## **What is an illicit discharge?**

An illicit discharge is defined as any discharge to the municipal separate storm sewer system (MS4) that is not composed entirely of stormwater, except for discharges allowed under a TPDES permit. Non-stormwater discharges can originate from direct connections to the storm drain system from business or commercial establishments (illicit connections), or indirectly as improper surface discharges to the storm drain system.

## **How does an illicit discharge happen?**

Illicit discharges can happen when pollutants are poured directly into a storm drain, ditch, or stream, as well as when pollutants are left out on the ground and picked up by runoff. Illicit discharges can also happen when a physical connection (like a pipe) is installed to carry pollutants from a source into a storm sewer system without a permit. An example might be a pipe connecting a house's dishwasher to a storm drain. This is unlawful: the only allowable discharge to a storm drain is rainwater along with a few specific non-stormwater discharges identified below.

## **Examples of illicit discharges**

The following should never go into storm drains or ditches, or onto the ground.

- Connections from washing machines, dishwashers or sinks
- Commercial car wash wastewater
- Paint, cleaners or chemicals

- Overflowing sanitary sewers
- Leaking septic tanks and failing septic fields
- Oil, gas and car fluids
- Chlorinated pool water
- Cooking oil and grease
- Litter and illegal dumping

## **What is NOT considered an illicit discharge?**

Most cities and counties allow these exceptions to illicit discharge laws:

- Landscape irrigation
- Individual residential car washing
- Air conditioning condensation
- Water from crawl space pumps
- Water from fire-fighting activities
- De-chlorinated pool water
- Rising ground waters or springs
- Uncontaminated pumped ground water
- Discharges from potable water sources
- Foundation and footing drain water

## **What is are indications of illicit discharges?**

The following are some of the physical indicators that can be observed and may indicate an illicit discharge:

- Oil sheen
- Algae
- Unusual color or cloudiness
- Foam or surface scum
- Floating debris
- Oil sheen
- Dead vegetation or inhibited growth
- Pipe corrosion
- Stains on channel bottom or sides

**Keep an eye out for illicit discharges in municipal drainage systems. Report illicit discharges to Victoria County Drainage District #3 at [info@victoriacdd3.org](mailto:info@victoriacdd3.org) or call 361-649-5848.**