

# Fact Sheet: Illicit Discharge



**An illicit discharge** is “any discharge that is not composed entirely of stormwater” (Environmental Protection Agency). Since sewer systems in our area transport water directly into our waterbodies, it is important that stormwater is as clean as possible. The result of untreated illicit discharges includes high levels of pollutants, including heavy metals, toxics, oil and grease, nutrients, viruses, and bacteria entering our waterbodies. These pollutants degrade water quality and threaten aquatic, wildlife, and human health.



Build-up of leaves and staining from an illicit discharge on storm drain.

## Detection:

Signs of an illicit discharge can include (but are not limited to):

- Staining
- Residues
- Oily Substances
- Odors
- Abnormal flow during dry weather periods
- Cloudy waters
- Suds

## Fast Facts

- **Storm Sewers drain to: Local waterbodies such as lakes, streams, rivers, and wetlands.**
- **The most common illicit discharge from homes is: Yard waste, including leaves, grass clippings and fertilizers.**

## Common Sources:

Illicit discharges come in many forms. Often times it is our everyday actions which cause damage to local waters. Common illicit discharges include:

- Yard waste
- De-icing materials
- Motor oil
- Pet waste
- Gasoline
- Paint
- Pesticides



Pick up dog waste to keep local waters clean.

Learn more about water protecting practices you can do at home.

Visit the District's Website at <https://www.warrenswcd.com>

## How to Prevent Illicit Discharges:

Follow Best Management Practices (BMPs) to keep pollutants from entering the water. BMPs vary based on activity. Below are a list of activities that landowners can do to prevent illicit discharges:

- Do not dump any substances into the storm sewer inlets or bodies of water.
- Rake leaves and grass clippings from lawns and deposit in a compost facility.
- Store materials that could pollute indoors, in waterproof containers that will not rust.
- Wash vehicles at a designated facility or in a grassy area where soapy runoff can be soaked up by soils and vegetation that work to filter pollutants.
- Recycle and re-use oil filters.
- Do not top off vehicles when filling up the gas tank.
- Recycle chemicals (i.e. motor oil, paint, pesticides, etc.) at a local collection center.



Wash your vehicle at a car wash or in a grassy area.



## What does WCSWCD do about Illicit Discharge?

The WCSWCD is regulated by a Municipal Separate Stormwater System (MS4) permit granted by the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA). As part of this permit the District is required to develop, implement, and enforce an illicit discharge detection and elimination program. Some of the ways the District addresses illicit discharges include:

- Engaging public through activities such as stream clean-up events and other educational outreach events.
- Monitoring construction sites.
- Labeling storm drains to prevent illegal dumping.
- Monitoring outfalls to locate problem areas and sources.
- Providing resources for implementation of best management practices such as buffers.



Drain tagging helps educate!



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