

Storm Water

Storm water runoff occurs when precipitation flows over the ground to a lake, stream, or river. Impervious surfaces such as driveways, parking lots, and buildings prevent storm water from naturally soaking into the ground.

Foreign substances, such as debris and chemicals, are dissolved in water at the surface and transported with storm water into streams, rivers, and other water bodies, causing pollution.



Due to the cost, most storm water is not treated to remove pollutants; it simply flows into a ditch or storm drain and is conveyed directly to our streams, lakes, and rivers. The following are examples of potential sources of storm water pollution in your community.

- Lawn chemicals can add fertilizers and herbicides to storm water.
- Oil stains on your driveway can be washed into storm water.
- Yard wastes.
- Faulty septic systems.
- Sanitary connections to storm water.
- Chemicals left outdoors and exposed to storm water have the potential to pollute it.

For more Information on Pollution Prevention:

Visit IDEM's Storm Water Webpage:

[IDEM: Storm Water Permitting: Home](https://www.IN.gov/idem/stormwater)

<https://www.IN.gov/idem/stormwater>

Help your kids learn about storm water:

[Learning and Teaching about the Environment | US EPA](https://www.epa.gov/students)

<https://www.epa.gov/students>

Learn about storm water and local events through the City of Evansville, Storm Water Management Department:

[Storm Water Management / City of Evansville \(evansvillegov.org\)](https://www.evansvillegov.org)

For more information on local storm water issues:

- Visit Vanderburgh County's Storm Water webpage: [Storm Water Information / Vanderburgh County \(evansvillegov.org\)](https://www.evansvillegov.org)
- Visit the County Engineer's Office located at 201 NW Fourth Street, Old Courthouse Suite 306.
- Call the County Engineer's Office at 812-435-5773.

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Storm Water Pollution Prevention: Protecting Your Waterways



Vanderburgh County has been designated by the Indiana Department of Environmental Management, or IDEM, as a municipal separate storm sewer system, or MS4, and is required to comply with a state-issued storm water permit. Your community is implementing a program to prevent storm water pollution and improve the water quality of local water bodies.

As part of this program, ordinances have been issued to protect storm water. One ordinance is for prohibiting illicit connections to the storm sewer and illegal dumping. Only rain water should enter storm drains or surface waters.

Refer to the [Vanderburgh County Illicit Discharge Ordinance](#).

What can you do to prevent storm water pollution?

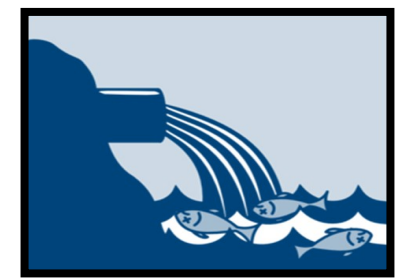
- Sweep up debris, rather than hosing down areas.
- Clean up after your pet and dispose of pet waste in a trash container or toilet. When left outdoors, pet waste contributes bacteria and nutrients to storm water.
- Use a commercial car wash or wash your car on an unpaved surface to reduce the amount of dirty, soapy water entering storm drains and waterways.
- Cover piles of soil and mulch being used for landscaping projects.
- Prevent debris from entering nearby storm drains when conducting outdoor home improvement or landscaping projects.
- If you have a septic system, have it serviced regularly. Make sure it is not connected to the storm sewer or polluting a creek or body of water.
- Drain your swimming pool only when a test kit shows non-detectable levels of chlorine and bromine.



- Clean up your property. Properly dispose of outdated or unused household chemicals stored in your basement, garage, or barn and do not store these materials outdoors.
- Recycle used oil, automotive fluids, batteries, and other products. Don't dispose of hazardous products in storm drains, alleys, or on the ground. This pollutes the drinking water supply.
- Do not store open containers, pails, buckets or pans of oils and chemicals outdoors.
- Reduce the amount of fertilizers, pesticides, or other hazardous chemicals that you use. Buy only what you need so that you don't have to dispose of leftovers. Read all the labels and follow directions.

Learn more about local recycling and Tox-Away Days by visiting the Vanderburgh County Solid Waste District website:

[Solid Waste Management / City of Evansville \(in.gov\)](https://www.vanderburghcountysolidwaste.com/)



What is an Illicit Discharge?

An illicit discharge is any discharge to a municipal separate storm sewer conveyance that is not composed entirely of storm water, except naturally introduced floatables, such as leaves or tree limbs.

Examples of illicit discharges may consist of the following: household hazardous wastes (oil, paint, pesticides, fertilizers, etc.); septic tank and sanitary sewer discharges; industrial wastes; chlorinated pool water; construction site sediment, trash, and other debris; wash water from dry cleaning facilities, laundromats and carwash facilities; etc.

Vanderburgh County's Ordinance prohibiting illicit discharges can be viewed at <https://www.codepublishing.com/IN/VanderburghCounty/#!/VanderburghCounty13/VanderburghCounty1306.html#13.06>

In rural settings, illicit discharge may also include historic dumps, sediment from fields and gardens, excess fertilizer on crops, waste from pets and livestock.

Help prevent illicit discharges to waterways by:

- Maintaining your septic system.
- Covering manure piles or keep away from waterways.
- Maintain or plant vegetation or grass buffers along waterways to filter sediment.
- Plant cover crops to prevent soil loss.