

WaterWatch



Illicit Storm Drainage System Connections

Storm sewers are designed to carry only stormwater which is defined as “any flow that occurs during or following any form of natural precipitation. (It) includes only the portion of such flow that is composed of precipitation.”

Can anything else go in Storm Drains?

We recognize that there are times when there will be water flowing from others sources into the storm drainage system. Beyond storm water, the City allows the following discharges into the storm sewer system:

- Lawn sprinkling
- Non-commercial car washing.
- Natural flows from streams, wetlands and groundwater (springs).
- Air conditioning condensation
- Dechlorinated water from swimming pools.
- Foundation drains, footing drains, or crawl space or basement pumps (if the discharges have been approved in writing by the City).

- City Activities such as fire fighting, emergency management or water system flushing
- Discharges allowed by a City of Orem Storm Sewer Connection Permit.



So why the concern?

Storm sewers in the City of Orem either flow through piped systems directly to irrigation canals, the Provo River or Utah Lake or they dissipate water back into the groundwater. In both cases, the storm water is not treated before it is received by the canals, river, lake or groundwater.

If pollutants such as oil, gasoline, fertilizer, pesticides, untreated sewage, etc. reach Utah

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Household Hazardous Waste: Gasoline

From time to time people will ask what they should do with a can of old unused gasoline. It is important to store and handle gasoline properly. Gasoline may be the most dangerous product commonly found around the house.

Storage

You probably do not need to keep more than 10 gallons at your home. Make sure gasoline is stored in a self-venting container. Keep at ground level, temperatures on high shelves in garages and sheds can be much higher than at ground level.



Precautions

Never smoke around gasoline. Avoid breathing the vapors when fueling your car or lawnmower. Never siphon gasoline using your mouth (can be fatal if one teaspoon goes into the lungs). When handling gasoline, wear nitrile gloves and thoroughly wash your hands when finished and before eating or smoking. Do not use as a cleaner or solvent. Never mix

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If you wouldn't drink it, don't dump it!

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We're on the Web!
www.orem.org

Gasoline

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gasoline with waste oil. Always fill your gas powered machines before they become heated by use.

Disposal

Best: Use up as an engine fuel. Strain old gasoline through a paint filter, dilute by one half with fresh gasoline and use up in your lawnmower.

2nd Best: Take your gasoline to the Salt Lake Valley Solid Waste Management Facility at 6030 West California Avenue (1400 South) in Salt Lake City. Disposal costs 25¢ per pound. This facility is open Mon - Sat, 8 am - 4 pm. If you have questions, please call (801) 541-4078.

Dumping gasoline and/or oil into sewers, storm drains or any body of water is illegal.

Taken from: Idaho Division of Environmental Quality, *Eliminating Household Hazardous Waste.*

Illicit Connections

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Lake or Provo River, water quality could be affected. This could directly damage wildlife and reduce the usability of these water bodies for recreational pursuits. There is also the potential that pollutants may compromise drinking water quality in the future.

Have there been any problems?

From time to time we find incorrect connections to the storm sewer system. It is unlawful to knowingly connect any other discharge source to the storm sewer system.



During the past two years the City has discovered by water sampling and television camera inspection two inadvertent sanitary sewer cross connections. That is to say, buildings that hooked their sewer outflow to groundwater pipes instead of pipes that flow to the sewage treatment plant.

In each case the building owners were notified to fix the connection. We are pleased to report that both owners quickly resolved the problems.

We will continue to monitor water quality in our storm sewer system and ask that if you need to connect to the storm sewer that you obtain the proper permit from the City.

Leaves in gutters

In the fall, leaf litter becomes an increasing problem as trees drop their leaves. These leaves can block up storm drain inlets much like paper can. They can be transported to irrigation canals, the Provo River, or Utah Lake.

As leaves decompose they add an increased nutrient load into the water body. When all other conditions are favorable, this may lead to large algal blooms. The decomposing leaves also release tannins which can discolor the water and negatively impact water quality.

Leaves and grass clippings can block up and choke the natural flow of canals and rivers. Submerged leaves can block out the sunlight and prevent sunlight penetration essential for the growth of underwater plants. Decreased sunlight penetration can also change the temperature of the water body, effecting both the plants and animals that live there.

As leaves in our watery environments begin to decompose, they can turn a waterway into what is basically a big, wet, soggy compost bin. Increased bacterial activity is necessary to break down the leaves. This consumes virtually all of the dissolved oxygen in the water. The reduced oxygen supply can create a stagnant condition that is unsuitable for some aquatic animals to survive.

Picking Up

The best contribution that residents and business owners can make towards keeping stormwater clean and preventing flooding is to keep gutters clean. Sweep out gutters regularly and dispose of sediments in gardens or in the garbage. Take time to pick up paper and other litter and throw it away in the garbage. Because just a few leaves can completely cover a drain inlet and prevent water from entering the storm drain, please collect leaves and grass clippings for composting.