

# What is an Illegal Discharge?

## STORMWATER AND WATER QUALITY

### Permitted Non-Stormwater Discharges

- ◆ Waterline Flushing
- ◆ Landscape Irrigation
- ◆ Rising Ground Waters
- ◆ Foundation Drains
- ◆ Springs
- ◆ Irrigation Water
- ◆ Lawn Watering
- ◆ Individual Household Car Washing
- ◆ Dechlorinated Pool Water
- ◆ Street Wash Water
- ◆ Discharges from Fire-fighting Activities
- ◆ Uncontaminated Pumped Groundwater

### “Dumping” May Cost You



Dumping anything other than stormwater into a street inlet is considered an illegal (illicit) discharge. Federal regulations dictate that MS4 communities shall only discharge stormwater from storm sewer pipes because this water does not get treated before it gets deposited back into our creeks and streams.

Studies by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) found a majority of the water being discharged from MS4s were not directly attributable to rainfall events. Many of these discharges often included inappropriate dumping activities by individuals, wastewater spills, infiltration of water from cracked pipes or illegal pipe connections to the storm system.

Stream health can suffer from illegal discharges by changing its pH level, raising the water temperature, and decreasing the level of oxygen necessary for plants and aquatic life.

### Be Alert

If you see any of the following items listed below or pictured on the back of this handout, please contact Plainfield Township so that staff can investigate and educate the individual(s) about alternative disposal solutions.

- ◆ Dumping used oil or automotive fluids
- ◆ Dumping grease or de-greasing agents
- ◆ Washing out concrete mixers or wheel barrels hauling cement
- ◆ Greywater with cleaning chemicals
- ◆ Any conditions similar to those shown on the back

### So What Can I Do to Help?

Many times people are unaware that their actions may be hurting the health of our watershed. Before you pour out your mop bucket into the street ask yourself “would I want to swim in this?” If not, then find an alternative disposal solution.

For Example: Consider pouring your dirty wash water in a section of lawn or planting bed that the water can infiltrate back into the ground. The vegetation helps to filter out sediment and other non-dissolved particles in the wastewater. Chemicals and detergents are also filtered, becoming less concentrated over time in the soil.

Water quality and overall environmental health of our streams are high priorities for the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) which oversees the federal MS4 program for Pennsylvania.

### Questions?

- ◆ Talk with Township Staff for more information on how to properly dispose of wastewater
- ◆ Check out the Township’s newsletter and website for Tips and Information on managing stormwater

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## Examples of Water Quality Concerns:

1 - Oil/Chemical sheen on the surface of a retention pond. Contamination source was from maintenance of lawn equipment on the sloped embankment of the pond.



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2 - Cloudy, white discharge from headwall during a period of dry weather. Unknown source for contamination.



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3 - Viscous flow of sediment (soil) mixed within the run off. Contamination source was a construction site that was not properly stabilized.



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4 - Suspended sediment within a detention pond.



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5 - Roadway spill left un-attended and not properly cleaned.

6 - Improper disposal of trash and construction debris in a project site near curb gutter and inlets.



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7 - Orange staining, a potential indicator of acidic discharge (low pH). Unknown source of contamination.

8 - Grass clippings blown into the street collected at storm inlets and traveled into the storm system. Accumulated clippings decreased the pipe's capacity and chemical fertilizers can enter the stream.



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## Ongoing Municipal Efforts

Every year Plainfield Township staff work diligently to manage the storm sewer system by:

- ◆ Educating residents about water quality and preventing stormwater contamination
- ◆ Providing tips on managing wastewater
- ◆ Conducting field inspections of storm pipes and drainage areas
- ◆ Performing needed repairs and routine maintenance tasks on existing infrastructure
- ◆ Monitoring construction activities and best management practices (BMPs)
- ◆ Enforcing Plainfield Township and DEP regulations

## What is an MS4 Community?

The Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System (MS4) is a conveyance system that is owned by a state, city, town, or other public entity that discharges to waters of the U.S.; is designed or used to collect or convey stormwater; it does not include a combined sewer; and is not part of a publicly owned sewage treatment plant.

Plainfield Township is an MS4 community discharging to the tributary streams within the Martins/Jacoby and Bushkill Creek Watersheds.

### For More Information on Stormwater and Helpful Tips:

PA DEP Municipal Stormwater Site

[http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/municipal\\_stormwater/21380](http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/community/municipal_stormwater/21380)

PA Stormwater

[www.stormwaterpa.org](http://www.stormwaterpa.org)

EPA Stormwater Homepage

<http://water.epa.gov/polwaste/npdes/stormwater/index.cfm>

Plainfield Township Homepage

<http://www.twp.plainfield.pa.us>