

What is Storm Water Pollution?

The stormwater drainage system collects all the rain that runs off hard surfaces such as pavement and rooftops. This runoff, called stormwater flows along the curb and gutter and then into a storm drain.

After entering the storm drain, stormwater is routed to the nearest lake, pond, or river.

Anything that enters the stormwater drainage system besides rainfall is considered an illicit discharge and is a violation of the Highlands County Illicit Discharge Ordinance.

Grease, oils and detergents have potential to cause fish kill and other biological degradation and restrict recreational activities such as swimming and fishing. The purpose of the Illicit Discharge Ordinance is to protect public health, safety and welfare by controlling pollution in our waterways.

Do **your** part to protect our environment from these types of pollution. Implement these best management practices today!



To schedule a visit to discuss preventative measures at your location, please contact:

Highlands County

Critical Infrastructure Department

(863) 402-6877



To report an illicit discharge, please call:

Highlands County

Critical Infrastructure Department

(863) 402-6877

You **CAN** make a Difference!



Protecting Our
Waters From
Stormwater Pollution

Preventing Illegal Discharges from Landscaping Businesses



Highlands County
Engineering Department

What is Illicit Discharge?

An illicit discharge is any direct or indirect non-stormwater discharge to the storm drain system.

An illicit connection is any connection which allows non-stormwater to enter the storm drain system including sewage, wastewater and wash water.



Good Working Practices to Follow

- **Mowing:**
Mow at the correct height for the type of sod: St. Augustine and Bahia at 3-4 inches, Bermuda and Centipede at 1.5 inches.
- **Grass Clippings and Leaves:**
DO NOT blow lawn clippings and leaves into the street or down the storm drain. Blow back onto the lawn or into a bed as free mulch and fertilizer.
- **Fertilize Wisely:**
Minimize use of fertilizers. Use a slow release with a low or 0 middle number (phosphorus). **DO NOT** fertilize when a large rain event is expected and **NEVER** within 10 feet of the water's edge.
- **Good Housekeeping:**
Don't leave excess fertilizer in the street or driveway. Sweep it up or blow back into the yard.
- **Cleaning Up Spills:**
Use absorbent cleaning agents instead of water to clean work area. Use dry methods for spill cleanup, i.e. sweeping. Keep dry absorbent materials nearby in case of a spill.
- **Save the Swales:**
Keep swales mowed and clear of blockages. **NEVER** fill in a swale.
- **Storm Drains:**
Keep swales mowed and clear of debris and vegetation. Never put chemicals, lawn clippings, soil or other debris down the storm drain.



Management Responsibilities

- **Equipment Maintenance:**
Designate a special area to drain and replace motor oil, coolant and other fluids where there are no connections to the storm drain.
- **Education and Training:**
Provide opportunities for employees to learn more about proper best management practices and protecting our waterways.
- **Chemical Storage:**
Be sure chemicals are stored properly, i.e. off the ground, out of the rain, etc. Have a hazardous materials response plan and be sure all employees are capable of implementing each phase of the plan.
- **Pest Management:**
Use integrated pest management practices to reduce the need for chemicals.
- **Water Management:**
Train employees to properly inspect irrigation systems. Know your clients' watering days!
- **Respect the Shoreline:**
Provide the information to employees on invasive plants and proper plants for shoreline area. **NEVER** allow an employee to remove shoreline vegetation without first determining the need for a permit.