



# City of Cañon City

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## Second Quarter 2009 Stormwater Management Program News

The 2009 newsletters will continue to focus on the program elements of our stormwater management permit from the State of Colorado. By discussing each element in detail, I hope to increase your understanding and awareness of our program. Our last issue focused on Public Education, Information, Participation, and Involvement; this issue will discuss Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination.

First, though, I would like to address a suggestion that was called into our office. There is an interest in City construction projects that involve spending stormwater funds that have been collected. Recently completed projects include the 54" storm sewer installed along Orchard Avenue to improve drainage and the removal of a storm drain inlet that emptied into the Hydraulic Ditch from 5<sup>th</sup> Street and Harrison during the repair of a box culvert. The following are current projects:

- 1) Installation of a new storm sewer along S. 10<sup>th</sup> Street in conjunction with street reconstruction.
- 2) Installation of a new storm sewer on Juniper Street to alleviate local flooding.
- 3) Vegetation management and routine maintenance of the city's stormwater facilities and drainage ways.
- 4) Various repairs or replacement of culverts, etc.
- 5) Floodplain study of Four Mile and Mudd Gulch
- 6) Floodplain study for the Abbey Drainage Basin
- 7) Floodplain study for the Whitewater Kayak Recreational Park and the Riverwalk Extension.

Now - on to the topic of Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE). You may wonder what exactly IDDE means. Basically it is the prevention, detection and removal of pollutants entering the stormwater system. The City of Cañon City's Stormwater Permit from the State of Colorado contains several requirements we must meet for illicit discharge detection and elimination. The City must:

- 1) **Develop and maintain a current storm sewer system map, showing the location of all municipal storm sewer outfalls and the names and locations of all state waters that receive discharges from those outfalls.** An outfall is the point where a storm sewer discharges to state waters. The City is continually updating its map of the storm sewer system.
- 2) **Effectively prohibit, through regulatory mechanisms, illicit discharges into the storm sewer system.** The City of Cañon City's Ordinance No. 20, Series of 2005, As Amended, prohibits illicit discharges into the storm sewer system and provides mechanisms for monitoring, inspection and enforcement.
- 3) **Develop, implement, and document a plan to detect and address non-stormwater discharges, including illicit discharges and illegal dumping, to the system.** The Illicit Discharge Detection & Elimination Manual, which can be found on our website, documents the procedures in place for detecting and eliminating illegal discharges to the storm sewer system. Outfalls are monitored throughout the year for dry-weather flows. When one is found to be discharging, water quality tests are done to help

determine the source and steps are taken to stop the discharge. The Stormwater Hotline, 276-5265, also provides a valuable tool for anyone to report illegal dumping.

Anything entering the stormwater system other than pure stormwater runoff is considered a pollutant, but some discharges are allowed. These can include lawn watering or irrigation, ground water, individual residential car washing, water from fire fighting activities and street wash water. Examples of discharges that are not allowed include, but are not limited to:

- ∞ Chemicals, petroleum products, paint, varnishes, solvents, automotive fluids (oil, grease, transmission fluid, antifreeze), pesticides, herbicides, fertilizers and cleaning products.



- ∞ Non-hazardous liquid, solid and yard waste.
- ∞ Hazardous materials, sewage and dissolved metals.
- ∞ Trash, food wastes, pet wastes.
- ∞ Landscaping materials, sediment, lawn clippings, leaves or other yard debris.
- ∞ Construction wastes including concrete.
- ∞ Any material that is considered harmful to humans, animals or aquatic life and its habitat.

You may also wonder why these substances are not allowed to enter the stormwater system. The stormwater system, unlike the sanitary sewer system, does not deliver the runoff water to a treatment plant before it is released to the river. Stormwater goes directly to our waterways without any treatment, thereby delivering anything it has picked up along the way directly into them. Polluted stormwater can have many adverse effects on plants, fish, animals and humans. Some of these include:

- ∞ Excess sediment in the water causes cloudiness which can make it difficult or impossible for aquatic plants to receive the sunlight they need to grow. It can also build up in waterways making navigation difficult.
- ∞ Nutrients from decaying biological material (leaves, garbage) can cause algae to bloom excessively. As the algae dies off, they sink to the bottom and decompose in a process that removes oxygen from the water. Fish and other aquatic organisms can't exist in water with low oxygen levels.
- ∞ Bacteria and other pathogens can wash into water bodies causing health hazards.
- ∞ Debris and garbage in water bodies can choke, suffocate or disable fish, turtles and birds. Plus it makes the water unfit or less enjoyable for recreation.
- ∞ Chemicals such as insecticides, pesticides, paint, solvents, oil and automobile fluids can poison aquatic life. Animals and humans can become sick or die from eating affected fish and shellfish or from ingesting polluted water.
- ∞ Many water bodies are used as sources for drinking water. Polluted stormwater can increase the cost of treatment and use of chemicals to make our drinking water safe. This increased expense is eventually passed on to our customers, something none of us like to see.

- 4) **Train municipal staff to recognize and appropriately respond to illicit discharges.** Appropriate city employees are trained on an ongoing basis and as needed.

## What can you do to help prevent stormwater pollution?

Here are a few tips that you can use to decrease the amount of pollution entering the storm sewer system.

1. Don't place lawn clippings, leaves and other yard waste along the curb and gutter. Place them in bags for pick up. Keep your gutters clean of debris.
2. Don't litter. Place all trash in trash cans.
3. When using fertilizer, pesticides or herbicides, don't over-apply. Follow the manufacturer's recommendations for proper application. Don't apply when rain is predicted and don't over water after applying them. Run-off from over-watering will carry excess fertilizer, pesticides or herbicides directly to the storm drain.
4. Bag pet waste and place in the trash can.
5. Sweep sidewalks and driveways instead of hosing them down. Bag the sweepings and place in the trash can. This applies to businesses also.
6. Promptly clean up any spills of chemicals and leaks from automobiles. Use a spill absorbent and sweep it up.
7. Wash your car on the lawn, using a biodegradable soap. This allows the grass to act as a filter, removing much of the contaminants from the wash water.
8. Dispose of used paint, solvents and automobile fluids properly. Below is a comparison of what our local trash disposal companies will accept.

	Howard Disposal		Twin Enviro		Waste Connections	
	Y	N	Y	N	Y	N
Paint		X	X*			X
Oil/Auto fluids		X	X*			X
Fertilizer, Pesticides, Herbicides		X	X*			X
Yard Waste	X**		X**		X**	

\*Twin Enviro will accept paint, oil, fertilizer, pesticide and herbicide in the trash can if it is dried out and solidified. This can be accomplished by mixing cat litter into it to dry it out. You can test if the substance is solidified by doing a paint filter test. To do this, place a paint filter in a clear jar then put the substance in the filter. If no drops of liquid are seen in the bottom of the jar after 5 minutes, the substance is considered to be solidified. Twin Enviro will also accept liquids taken directly to their landfill for an additional charge.

\*\*All companies accept yard waste if it is bagged. Twin Enviro will also accept branches if they have been bundled into no more than two foot lengths.

Used oil can also be dropped off at AutoZone or Checkers.

I would like to thank Lori at Howard Disposal, Gary of Twin Enviro and Charmaine at Waste Connections for their assistance in gathering this information.

**Remember: The responsibility for keeping our City's and State's waterways clean for all to enjoy ultimately falls to everyone in the choices they make. Please make wise choices.**

Please feel free to direct any concerns or questions to Glenda DeBekker, City of Cañon City Stormwater Program at either [grdebekker@canoncity.org](mailto:grdebekker@canoncity.org) or 276-5265. You may also write to The City of Cañon City's Stormwater Program, P.O. Box 1460, Cañon City, CO 81215-1460.