



# City of Cañon City

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## Third Quarter 2010 Stormwater Management Program News

I would like to thank everyone who has called into the Stormwater Hotline concerning blocked inlets and drainage problems. The Public Works Street Department has recently acquired a vac truck to facilitate inlet cleaning. They are systematically cleaning the inlets, but your calls help to pinpoint those in need of immediate attention. Keep the calls coming!

**Summer!** That means yard work and more outdoor activities for many people. This issue will focus on tips for preventing stormwater runoff contamination from those activities.

### **Lawn/Landscaping Maintenance**

For those of you with lawns, summer means fertilizing, watering, mowing and other lawn and garden care. When fertilizing, take care to not over-apply the fertilizer, pesticides or herbicides. Use only the amount recommended by the manufacturer. Don't apply these products during rain or when rain is forecasted. Excess fertilizer and pesticides can be washed off your lawn into the street, eventually arriving at the river. Store or dispose of any left over chemicals properly. Consider mulching or composting yard waste. Lawn clippings and leaves cannot be placed in the street or along the curb. If not mulched or composted, it should be bagged and put out for pick-up by your waste disposal company. Materials used in landscaping, such as dirt, mulch and rocks, should not be stored in the street or on an impervious surface. If these materials do need to be stored for a short period of time, dirt and mulch should be covered and all materials should have some type of best management practice in place, such as straw wattles or rock bags around the perimeter to prevent stormwater run-off contamination.

If you are installing new landscaping, consider xeriscapes, rain gardens or grass swales. Xeriscaping uses less water and chemicals. Rain gardens and grass swales can provide a place for rain water to collect and soak into the ground. Rain from rooftops or paved areas can be diverted into these areas instead of running off into the street.

Instead of hosing off your driveway or sidewalks, conserve water and prevent contaminated water reaching the river by sweeping these areas. Scoop up the sweepings and place in the garbage dumpster. This applies to business owners also. For businesses with a parking lot use dry sweeping, wet vacuum sweeping or collecting the wash water and properly disposing of it to keep your lot clean.

### **Other Outdoor Activities**

Summer provides the opportunity to work on many other outdoor projects, such as auto maintenance, car washing and work on the exterior of your home. When washing your automobile at your residence, consider washing it on your lawn or other vegetated area using a biodegradable soap. This prevents the dirt, grease and oil from your vehicle from washing down the driveway or street into a nearby inlet. The vegetation will soak up the water and act as a filter for contaminants. If you change your own oil and other automotive fluids, take care to avoid spills. If a spill does occur, clean it up immediately using a spill absorbent or cat litter to soak it up. Then sweep the absorbent up and dispose of it in the garbage. Make sure to take used oil and auto fluids to your local car parts dealer for recycling. Never pour it in the street or down a storm drain.

Materials used in other projects should be stored properly to prevent run-off contamination. Contact your local waste disposal company for information on disposal of chemicals such as paint, mineral spirits and lacquer thinner.

Make sure to keep your pet's area free of waste and to pick up after your pet when on walks. This helps prevent bacteria and excess nutrients from entering the storm drain system and the river.

## Trash

Take care to keep your garbage pails and dumpsters covered to prevent trash from being blown out of the container. Blowing trash can end up in the streets, gutters and drainageways where it can be washed down an inlet or into the river during a storm event. Don't litter: all garbage should be placed in trash receptacles.

### **A special note on drainage channels and ditches:**

All drainage channels, even if they are usually dry, are considered a part of Cañon City's stormwater system. The City of Cañon City's CITY ORDINANCE NO. 20, SERIES OF 2005, AS AMENDED prohibits illicit discharges into our stormwater system. An "illicit discharge" is defined as any direct or indirect release of pollutants into the storm sewer system not composed entirely of stormwater. The storm sewer system includes all publicly-owned facilities by which storm water is collected and conveyed, including, but not limited to any roads with drainage systems, municipal streets, gutters, catch basins, inlets, piped storm drains, pumping facilities, retention and detention basins, and natural and human-made or altered drainage ditches/channels/lakes/reservoirs, and other drainage structures. What this means is that nothing other than stormwater, ground water or irrigation water can be placed in these structures. For those of you who live near drainage channels or ditches or enjoy activities near them, please remember that yard waste, pet waste and trash cannot be placed in or upon the banks of these channels or facilities. All channels eventually drain to the Arkansas River and anything in them has the potential to be washed into it, causing pollution.

For more information on The City of Cañon City's Municipal Code concerning illicit discharges, please visit our website at [www.canoncity.org](http://www.canoncity.org). Click on Municipal Code & Charter, select Municipal Code, Title 8, Chapter 8.70.

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.



**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.**

Enjoy your summer!