


You make the difference.

Help protect our water for the next generation.

- **Properly dispose of household hazardous waste.** Never dump items such as motor oil, fuels, paints, cement, cleansers and pesticides on the ground or down the drain. These contaminate groundwater and surface waters. Instead, take them to the Kalamazoo County Household Hazardous Waste Center at 1301 Lamont St, Kalamazoo. Call 269-373-5211 for their hours of operation and other disposal advice.
- **Keep septic systems working properly.** Have septic systems checked every 2–3 years.
- **Check fuel storage tanks regularly for leaks.** Leaking aboveground and underground storage tanks are a major source of contamination. Check them!
- **Properly close abandoned wells.** Contract a driller to properly plug unused wells on your property. Unused wells transport contaminants directly to groundwater. We drink groundwater!
- **Wash cars away from storm drains.** When washing cars, direct wash water away from the streets and storm drains. If possible, wash cars on the lawn so that water can be absorbed and filtered.
- **Dispose of pet waste.** Pet waste can be high in bacteria and nutrients, and should be disposed of in a toilet or trash can.
- **Compost grass clippings and leaves.** Direct your mower discharge away from the street so grass clippings and leaves never get into roadways.
- **Don't guess, soil test.** Over-applications of fertilizers and insecticides can make their way into both surface water and groundwater. Apply lawn chemicals only as needed. Phosphorus is banned unless a soil test indicates deficiency. Follow the directions on the container.
- **Landscape naturally.** Consider landscaping with plants native to the area. They are well suited to our climate, pest resistant, and can reduce the need for irrigation and fertilizer.
- **Properly dispose of swimming pool waste water.** Chemicals in pools and spas can be hazardous to local streams and lakes. 3–5 days after the last chemicals added, direct water to drain to a grassed area on your own property.



Call our 24-Hour Hotline if you witness a suspicious discharge, because clean water is everybody's business!

24-Hour Water Pollution HOTLINE

Because clean water is everybody's business!

269.381.3171

Brought to you by the partnership of Kalamazoo Storm Water Work Group:

City of Kalamazoo
City of Portage
Kalamazoo County Road Commission
Kalamazoo County Office of Drain Commissioner
City of Galesburg
City of Parchment
Village of Vicksburg
Western Michigan University
Kalamazoo River Watershed Council
Kalamazoo Public Schools
Kalamazoo County Health and Community Services

For additional information, visit other water quality websites:

www.kalamazooringeriver.org
<http://www.kalcounty.com/drain/education.htm>

Additional assistance for this brochure came from:
Greater Battle Creek Area Watershed Management Committee
Michigan Department of Environmental Quality
Clean Michigan Initiative
Barry-Eaton District Health Department
Horry County, South Carolina

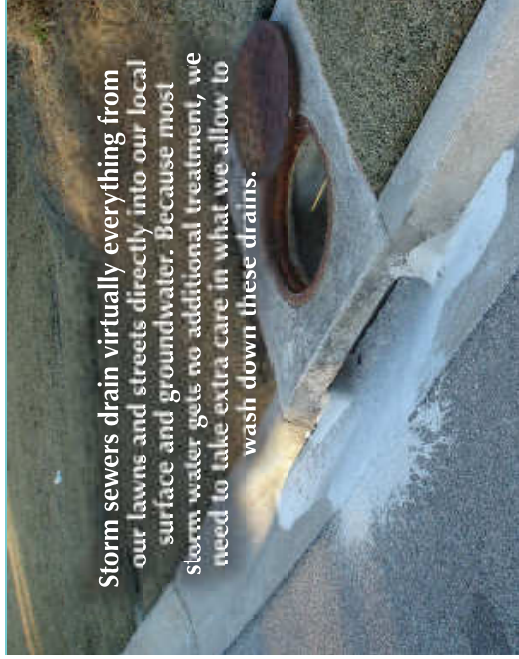
Illicit Discharge Elimination Program

Illicit discharge means pollution.

An illicit discharge is any discharge to the storm water drainage system that is not just rainwater. Some examples of illicit discharges include dumping of motor vehicle fluids; industrial, commercial or household hazardous wastes; direct connections between household plumbing and storm drains, failing septic fields; unauthorized discharges of sewage, industrial waste; restaurant waste; or anything else that is not rainwater. Grass clippings, leaf litter, animal waste and pool waste water are also sources of pollution.

When these illicit discharges reach rivers and lakes they impact the waterways we use for swimming, fishing and other recreational activities. Identification and elimination of illicit discharges is necessary to protect our water resources and prevent water-borne illnesses.

When you make a call to report an illicit discharge, you are protecting our rivers and lakes, as well as the fish and wildlife that live in and around them.



Storm sewers drain virtually everything from our lawns and streets directly into our local surface and groundwater. Because most storm water gets no additional treatment, we need to take extra care in what we allow to wash down these drains.

What you can do.

Illicit discharges to water bodies such as streams, lakes and wetlands contribute to the degradation of the environment. Streams in Kalamazoo County flow to the Kalamazoo and St. Joseph Rivers, which eventually reach Lake Michigan. The Kalamazoo Storm Water Work Group is committed to protecting these valuable resources. However, we need your help to identify illicit discharges.

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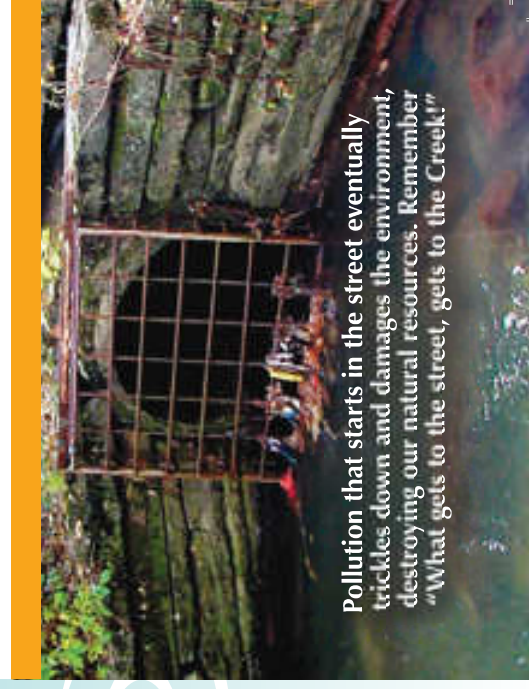
What you can do.

Please call our hotline if you observe:

- A strong or chemical odor near a storm water inlet or outfall.
- Discharges—someone dumping suspicious substances into drains or into a water body
- Sewage on the ground surface

Be prepared to give the following information:

- Location of complaint
- Source of pollution, if known
- Responsible party, if known
- Any other relevant observations



Pollution that starts in the street eventually trickles down and damages the environment, destroying our natural resources. Remember "What gets to the street, gets to the Creek!"