## What is Storm Water?

Storm water is water from precipitation that flows across the ground and pavement when it rains or when snow and ice melt. The water seeps into the around or drains into what we call storm sewers. These are the drains you see at the street corners or at low points on the sides of the street. Collectively, the draining water is called storm water runoff.

## **Good Rain Gone Wrong**

Storm water becomes a problem when it picks up debris, chemicals, dirt and other pollutants as it flows or when it causes flooding and erosion of stream banks. Storm water travels through a system of pipes and roadside ditches that make up storm sewer systems. It eventually flows directly to a lake, river, stream, pond or wetland. All of the pollutants storm water carries along the way empty into our waters, too, because storm water does not get treated!

- Pet wastes left on the ground get carried away by storm water, contributing to harmful bacteria, parasites and viruses to our water.
- ٠ Vehicles drip fluids (oil, grease, gasoline, etc) onto paved areas where storm water runoff carries them through our storm drains and into our water.



City of Menasha Storm Drain Stenciling Program



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land to a receiving lake, river or stream.

- can also include ditches used to convey storm water from the think that the system is just a series of underground pipes. It 1. Ditch – part of the storm sewer drainage system. Most people
- water should not be allowed to enter a stream. systems open hydrants to flush their water lines the chlorinated sprayed on tires is not regulated as storm water, but it water 2. Fire Hydrant - Not part of the storm sewer system. Water
- storm drain to prevent it trom being used as a trash can. without being treated tirst. It is important to recognize this as a that enters this drain will go directly to streams, rivers or lakes Storm Drain Inlet - Part of the storm sewer system. Anything
- pollutants to the storm sewer system, as well as directly to Improperly maintained septic systems can leak and contribute owners use septic tanks to manage sanitary wastes on-site. Septic System - Not part of the storm sewer system. Home-

lakes, rivers and streams.

3.

Department of Public Works-(920) 967-3610 100 Main Street, Suite 200 Menasha, WI 54952 https://www.cityofmenasha-wi.gov/

Where to Go to Continue the Information Flow?

Menasha is preventing storm water pollution through a storm water management program with

the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

This program addresses storm water pollution from

construction, new development, illegal dumping to

the storm sewer system, and pollution prevention

and good housekeeping practices in municipal

operations. It will also continue to educate the community and get everyone involved in making

sure the only thing that storm water contributes to

Contact our office at (920) 967-3610.

our

water is...water!









Understanding How Storm Water Affects Your Wallet, Safety, Health and Environment In Wisconsin

# **Be Storm Water Smart**



Neenah-Menasha Fire Station 35—Rain Garden

### What Happens When it Rains?

Rain is an important part of nature's water cycle, but there are times it can do more damage than good. Problems related to storm water runoff can include:

- Flooding caused by too much storm water flowing over hardened surfaces such as roads and parking lots, instead of soaking into the ground.
- Increases in spending on maintaining storm drains and the storm sewers that become clogged with excessive amounts of dirt and debris.
- Decreases in aquatic species because storm water carries sediment and pollutants that degrade important fish habitat.
- More expensive treatment technologies to remove harmful pollutants carried by storm water into our drinking water supplies.

We can help rain restore its good reputation while protecting our health and environment while saving money for ourselves and our community.

### Test Your Storm Sewer System Knowledge

What does the storm sewer system look like in your community? See if you can identify which pictures are part of the storm sewer system. (Answers are on the back.)









## Restoring Rain's Reputation: What Everyone Can Do To Help

Rain by nature is important for replenishing drinking water supplies, recreation and healthy wildlife habitats. It only becomes a problem when pollutants from our activities like car maintenance, lawn care and dog walking are left on the ground for rain to wash away. Here are some of the most important ways to prevent storm water pollution.

- Properly dispose of hazardous substances such as used oil, cleaning supplies and paint — never pour them down any part of the storm sewer system and report anyone who does.
- Use pesticides, fertilizers and herbicides properly and efficiently to prevent excess runoff.
- Look for signs of soil and other pollutants, such as debris and chemicals, leaving construction sites in storm water runoff or tracked into roads by construction vehicles. Report poorly managed construction sites that could impact storm water runoff to your community.
- Install innovative storm water practices on residential property, such as rain barrels or rain gardens, that capture storm water and keep it on site instead of letting it drain away into the storm sewer system.