

STORM WATER

Frequently storm water management obligations are misunderstood by communities. Over the years communities across the country have been implementing measures to improve the quality of our storm water and reduce the quantity of contaminants reaching our streams and rivers. A couple examples of these measures are, adding dog waste stations to our parks and constructing raingardens around the City. The City of Independence would like to share some facts and tips on how to help keep storm water clean for your watershed.

A water shed is an area of land that drains to a common point, such as a nearby creek, stream, river or lake. Every small watershed drains to a larger watershed that eventually flows to the ocean. Watersheds support a wide variety of plants and wildlife and provide many outdoor recreation opportunities. Protecting the health of our watersheds preserves and enhances the quality of life for Independence.



CONTACT INFORMATION

For more information about storm water management, contact:

City of Independence
555 S Main St.
Independence OR
503-838-1212

Luckiamute Watershed Council
503-837-0237
info@luckiamutelwc.org

For additional information about storm water management visit these websites:

<http://www.co.polk.or.us/cd/building/stormwater-resources>

<https://www.ci.independence.or.us>

INDEPENDENCE

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BE THE SOLUTION TO WATER POLLUTION

WHAT IS STORM WATER RUNOFF?

Storm water is water from rain or melting snow. Not all water runoff soaks into the ground, it flows from rooftops, over paved streets, sidewalks and parking lots, across bare soil and through lawns and storm drains. As it flows, runoff collects and transports soil, pet waste, salt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil, grease, litter, toxic metals such as mercury and other pollutants. Untreated storm water drains directly into nearby creeks, streams and rivers. Polluted storm water contaminates local waterways. It can harm plants, fish and wildlife, while degrading the quality of water.

WHAT IS SEDIMENT?

Sediment is the loose sand, clay, silt and other soil particles that settle at the bottom of a body of water. Sediment can come from soil erosion or from the decomposition of plants and animals. Wind, water and ice help carry these particles to rivers and lakes.

SEDIMENT FACTS

The E.P.A. lists sediment as the most common pollutant in rivers, streams and lakes.

Natural erosion produces nearly 30% of the total sediment in the U.S. Accelerated erosion from human use of land accounts for the remaining 70%.

The most concentrated sediment releases come from construction, including relatively minor home remodeling like room additions.

Sediment pollutants annually causes \$16 billion in environmental damage.

WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WITH SEDIMENT?

Sediment can contain mercury that has been identified as a pollutant affecting water quality and beneficial uses of the Willamette River. Moreover, sediment entering storm water degrades the quality of water for drinking, wildlife and the land surrounding streams in the following ways:

- 1.Sediment fills up storm drains and catch basins used to carry water away from roads and homes, which increase the potential for flooding.
- 2.Water polluted with sediment becomes cloudy and murky, preventing animals from seeing food or natural vegetation from growing in water.
- 3.Sediment in waterways disrupts the natural food chain by destroying the habitat where the smallest organisms live and causing massive declines in fish populations. As well as clog fish gills, reducing resistance to disease and affecting fish egg and larvae development.
- 4.Sediment raises the cost of treating drinking water and can result in odor and taste issues.
- 5.Nutrients transported by sediment can activate blue-green algae that release toxins and can make swimmers sick.
- 6.Sediment deposits in rivers can alter the flow of water and reduce water depth which makes navigation and recreational use more difficult.



WHAT CAN YOU DO?



- 1.Sweep sidewalks and driveways into the garbage and not hose off into the storm drains.
- 2.Use weed free mulch when reseeding bare spots on your lawn or on your garden to help keep soil from washing away.
- 3.Clean oil spills or leaks by placing kitty litter to absorb the oil and dispose of it properly.
- 4.Notify local government officials when you see sediment entering streets or streams near a construction site.
- 5.Avoid mowing within 10 to 25 feet from the edge of a stream or creek. To create a safe buffer zone that will help minimize erosion and naturally filter storm water runoff. Which will also help keep shading around streams and creeks and cooler water temperature for fish.
- 6.Wash your car at a commercial car wash or on an absorbent surface, such as grass or gravel.
- 7.Help pick up trash and debris from the street gutters before it gets washed into storm drains.
- 8.Pick up pet waste to help reduce the potential for disease causing bacteria.
- 9.Participate or volunteer in Clean-up day or Arbor day.