

What is stormwater?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow that does not immediately soak into the ground. Stormwater runs off land and hard surfaces such as streets, parking lots, and rooftops, and picks up pollutants, such as fertilizers, dirt, pesticides, and oil and grease. Eventually, stormwater soaks into the ground or flows into rivers, lakes, and streams, bringing pollutants with it.

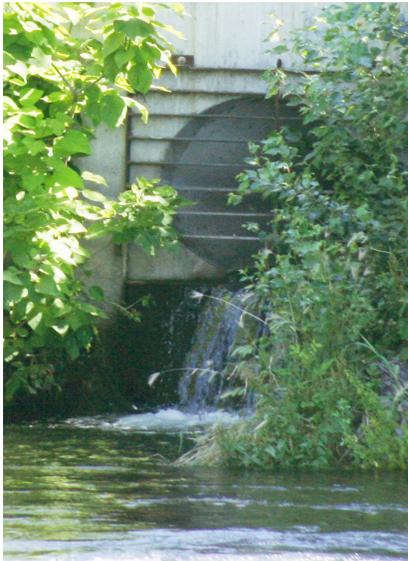


Photo courtesy of Boise City

What is a storm drain?

A storm drain is a drain (usually a grate) along the side of a road or in a parking lot that funnels water from a street, parking lot, or other hard surface into a stormwater pipe. Stormwater pipes channel stormwater to nearby bodies of water, such as rivers and lakes, or to ground water.

For More Information

Idaho Department of Environmental Quality

State Office
Water Quality Division
1410 N. Hilton
Boise, ID 83706
(208) 373-0487

Regional Offices

Boise
1445 N. Orchard
Boise, ID 83706
(208) 373-0550
toll-free: (888) 800-3480

Coeur d'Alene
2110 Ironwood Parkway
Coeur d'Alene, ID 83814
(208) 769-1422
toll-free: (877) 370-0017

Idaho Falls
900 N. Skyline, Suite B
Idaho Falls, ID 83402
(208) 528-2650
toll-free: (800) 232-4635

Lewiston
1118 F Street
Lewiston, ID 83501
(208) 799-4370
toll-free: (877) 541-3304

Pocatello
444 Hospital Way #300
Pocatello, ID 83201
(208) 236-6160
toll-free: (888) 655-6160

Twin Falls
650 Addison Ave. W,
Suite 110
Twin Falls, ID 83301
(208) 736-2190
toll-free: (800) 270-1663

Web Resources

Stormwater in Idaho: An Overview
www.deq.idaho.gov/stormwater

After the Storm: A Citizen's Guide to Understanding Stormwater
www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/after_the_storm.pdf

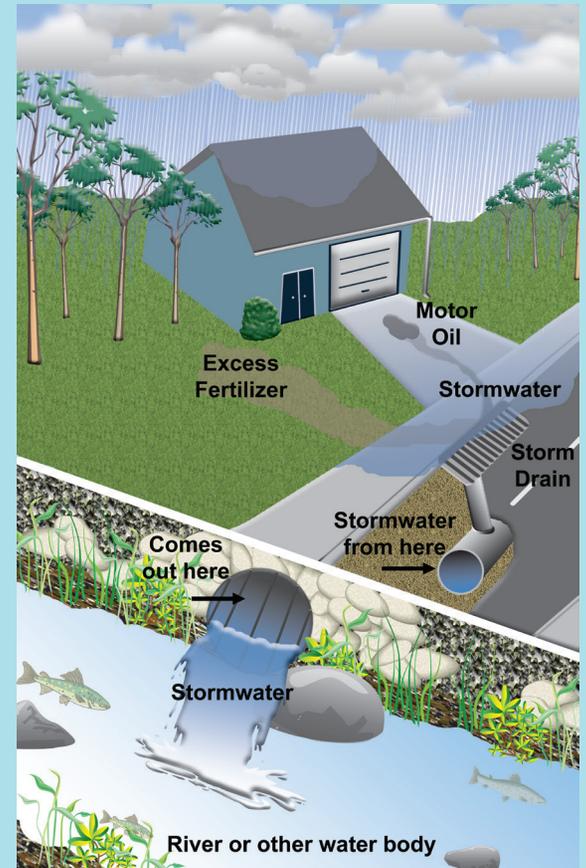
Make Your Home the Solution to Stormwater Pollution
www.epa.gov/npdes/pubs/solution_to_pollution.pdf



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Water in Idaho

Down the Drain with Stormwater



Idaho Department of Environmental Quality
www.deq.idaho.gov



Why do we care about stormwater?

In Idaho, stormwater is channeled to rivers, streams, or lakes, or underground to ground water (it is also channeled to the ocean in coastal areas of the U.S.). It is not cleaned at a wastewater treatment plant. This means all of the pollutants carried by stormwater are also channeled to these water bodies. If you pour something down a storm drain or in a gutter, it is just as though you poured it directly into your favorite swimming hole or fishing spot, or even into the source of your drinking water.



What can I do to prevent stormwater pollution?

- Never pour anything other than pure water into a gutter or down a storm drain.
- Only use as much pesticide and fertilizer as necessary (read package instructions). Extra product (and your money!) goes down storm drains.
- Position sprinklers so you only water your lawn (not the driveway, sidewalk, etc.), and only use as much water as necessary. Extra goes down storm drains and takes pollutants with it.
- Use a commercial car wash. Commercial car washes recycle their wastewater and some also treat it before it is sent into the sewer system. If you do wash your car at home, use a bucket or a nozzle that you can turn off so the hose isn't running the entire time and wash your car on the lawn so the extra water soaks into the ground. Use cleaners sparingly.
- Pick up after your pet. Pet waste on the ground adds bacteria and nutrients to the stormwater, and eventually to local water bodies.
- Recycle, trade, or properly dispose of household products that contain chemicals. Do not pour them onto the ground or into gutters or storm drains.
- Participate in a program to educate your neighbors about stormwater pollution by marking storm drains with "Dump No Waste" markers. Contact your local public works department or the Department of Environmental Quality (208/373-0124) for more information on marking programs.

