



FORT LAUDERDALE CURRENTS

Rains, Drains and Pollutants...A Dangerous Mix for the City's Waterways



South Florida's rainy season is a time when the need for stormwater pollution prevention is more important than ever. The excessive storm water generated by heavy downpours flows from driveways, streets and sidewalks, picks up pollutants and carries them to the nearest storm drain. While water flowing into a storm drain is very visible, the pollutants are not. Where does the water flowing into the storm drain go?

Stormwater is deposited, untreated, into the same water bodies used for swimming, fishing and providing drinking water. This means grease, fertilizer, paints, solvents, soaps, antifreeze, yard waste, construction debris and other pollutants are flowing right into the City's waterways. This "polluted" water can negatively impact water quality as well as aquatic plant and marine life.

With 138 miles of storm drainpipe and approximately 6,525 storm drains and catch basins, the City has a lot of entry points for pollutants. While it may seem impossible to manage, there are many things that residents can do to help prevent pollutants from entering storm drains:

- If there is a clogged storm drain or catch basin near your property, please remove the debris. You may also report clogged storm drains by calling the 24-hour Customer Service Center at 954.828.8000.
- Put all yard waste in the designated yard waste cart for sanitation pick up. Do not put grass cuttings and yard waste in the storm drain or the street.
- Bag pet waste and dispose of it in your outside garbage cart. Do not put pet waste in the storm drain or hose it into the ground.
- Practice proper automotive maintenance. Check all vehicles and motorcycles for leaks. Properly clean up any spilled fluids immediately with an absorbent material such as cat litter or sand and properly dispose of waste.
- Properly dispose of used motor oil, automotive fluids, paints, pool chemicals, pesticides, household cleaners, lawn and garden chemicals, automotive fluids and other household hazardous waste at a Broward County Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) collection site (for locations please visit www.broward.org/waste/iwi04100.htm).

- Use hazardous chemicals sparingly and follow the instructions on the label. Clean up spills immediately and properly dispose of waste.
- Clean paint brushes in a sink, not outside.
- Use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly. Apply only the recommended amounts and avoid applying if rain is forecasted.
- Avoid over watering the lawn. Water during the cooler times of the day. Properly adjust sprinklers so they do not water the pavement and turn the sprinkler system off when rain is expected.
- Purchase and use non-toxic, biodegradable, recycled and recyclable products when possible.

It is illegal to dump anything down a storm drain. Please report any illegal dumping into the storm water system by contacting the 24-hour Customer Service Center at 954-828-8000 or online at www.fortlauderdale.gov/customerservice. Please be prepared to provide the exact address or specific location.