

WHAT IS STORM WATER RUNOFF?

Storm water runoff is rainfall or snowmelt that runs off impervious surfaces like roads, buildings, and compacted soils. Storm water runoff is collected and conveyed through storm sewers directly into streams, rivers, and lakes without being treated.

THE PROBLEM

Pollutants accumulate on impervious surfaces between rainfall events. Frequent, small rains wash pollutants into streams, rivers, and lakes. These pollutants negatively impact water quality.

As communities grow, impervious areas increase. Larger amounts of impervious surfaces cause the volume and rate of storm water runoff to increase. This can result in flooding, stream channel degradation, and increased water pollution in our surface waters.

STORM WATER POLLUTANTS

- Sediment from construction sites
- Pesticides and nutrients from lawns, parks, and roadsides
- Bacteria from pet waste
- Oil and grease from car leaks, gas stations, and industrial areas
- Trash such as cigarette butts, paper wrappers, and plastic bottles
- Illegally dumped pollutants
- Thermal impacts from sun-heated impervious surfaces
- Salt and sand from snow and ice control applications
- Illicit connections to storm sewers

STORM WATER MANAGEMENT

The traditional approach to storm water management focuses primarily on flood control. Today, our city is required to manage for both water quality and quantity by using practices that infiltrate more rainfall and reduce the volume of storm water runoff.

STORM WATER REGULATIONS IN OUR CITY

To comply with new federal regulations, our city is required to implement a new storm water management program. Some requirements include:

1. Managing storm water runoff for water quality protection,
2. Reducing sediment loss from construction sites,
3. Developing ordinances to meet program goals,
4. Inspecting storm drain outlets for unwanted discharges, and
5. Providing public education and involvement.



Oil, grease, and other pollutants accumulate on impervious surfaces.

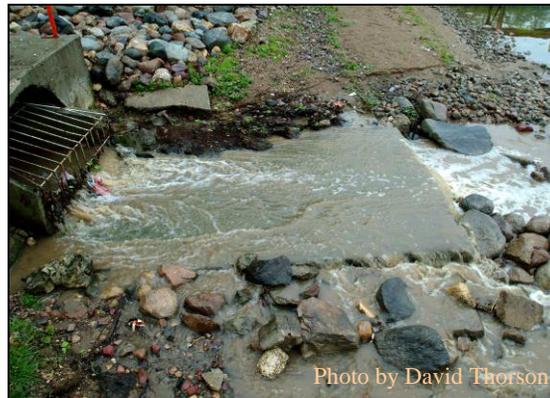


Photo by David Thorson

Storm water flows through storm drains that outlet into Iowa streams, rivers, and lakes.



Photo by David Thorson

Storm water runoff plume discharging pollutants into an Iowa lake.

AWARENESS & RESPONSIBILITY

Daily activities can impact water quality. Most rainfall drains untreated to streams and lakes through storm drains in neighborhoods carrying with it all of the pollutants we deposit on the pavement. There are many ways you can prevent storm water pollution:

1. Wash your car at a carwash or on the lawn, not the driveway,
2. Re-direct roof drains to gardens or other vegetated areas,
3. Properly dispose of all hazardous household waste,
4. Minimize use of fertilizers, and
5. Clean up after your pets.
6. Aerate and spread or spray compost on the lawn for healthier vegetation.



This brochure is part of the public education campaign for our storm water program. Our community is a member of the Iowa Stormwater Education Program.

The Iowa Stormwater Education Program provides educational resources and guidance to member communities about storm water management.

For additional information:
www.cedarfalls.com or
www.iowastormwater.org

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Managing Storm Water in Our Community



Photo by Clay Smith, Iowa DNR

Storm water can pose a risk to our water resources. Pollutants in storm water can impact lakes, streams and rivers. Programs to control storm water pollution have been adopted by our community.