

Septic Tank Maintenance

Septic tanks hold water that carries harmful bacteria and microorganisms that can come into contact and pollute storm water, groundwater, creeks, rivers, lakes, and streams.

- Inspect/clean your septic tank regularly to avoid overflows.
- Do not park or drive vehicles on any part of your septic system.
- In order to avoid damage from roots, do not plant trees or shrubs over or near your septic system.
- Do not allow wastewater to flow into storm drains, ditches, streets, etc...
- Flush only human and animal waste, toilet paper and wastewater.
- Non-biodegradable items such as diapers, condoms, sanitary napkins, baby wipes, cigarette butts, or cat litter should not be flushed.

Storm Drains vs. Sanitary Sewers

Storm drains are intended to collect and transport runoff from rainfall. Storm drain systems do not remove pollutants from water before discharging it into creeks, streams, or rivers. The storm drainage system includes all storm drains, roadside gutter pans and ditches, drainage channels and swales, creeks and streams.

Sanitary Sewers collect wastewater from indoor plumbing such as toilets, sinks, mop sinks, and floor drains and take it to a sewage treatment facility. The treatment facility removes many harmful pollutants from wastewater before discharging it to the river.

REMEMBER, storm water is not treated and goes straight to a body of water — where we swim & fish!

Storm Water Pollution Prevention



Lawn & Garden Maintenance

Proper Disposal of Litter

Chemicals & Hazardous Waste

Pet Waste

Vehicle Washing, Repair & Maintenance

Swimming Pool Care

Septic Tank Maintenance

Storm Drains vs. Sanitary Sewers



Storm Water Management
Educational Series

Lawn & Garden Maintenance

- Use fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides sparingly.
- Don't use fertilizers, herbicides or pesticides before a rainstorm.
- Compost or recycle yard waste, such as leaves and grass clippings.
- Cover piles of soil, sand and mulch to prevent them from washing into storm drains, streets, or driveways.
- Sweep up debris rather than hosing down outside areas.
- Keep trash and litter, oils, leaves, and pollutants off streets, driveways and storm drains.
- Plant grass or trees in areas where soil is exposed, or cover with erosion control netting to prevent erosion.

Proper Disposal of Litter

- Trash should be discarded in a water tight trash can or dumpster - do not stockpile any waste materials.
- Carry a bag in your car to collect trash.
- Separate recyclable materials such as metals, glass, plastics, newspapers and magazines, in a sealed bin or container until it is ready for pickup or disposal at an approved location.
- Cigarette butts are litter. Use an ashtray for cigarette butts and ashes, and properly dispose in trash can as needed - not on the street.
- Do not litter or throw trash on streets or into storm drains - you could be fined.

Chemicals & Hazardous Waste

- Use hazardous materials, such as paints, solvents, and cleaners in the smallest amounts possible.
- Properly store chemicals and hazardous wastes in their original containers.
- Dispose of chemicals and hazardous wastes, including batteries, paints and thinners and household cleaners according to the directions printed on the label.
- Do not pour into storm drains.
- Clean up spills immediately using paper towels or other dry absorbent materials.

Pet Waste

- Clean up pet waste when you are walking your pet. Pet waste should be flushed down a toilet or bagged and disposed of in regular garbage.
- Properly dispose of pet waste at parks-use litter bags and dispose in marked containers. Make sure the lid is closed to prevent rain water contact.
- Do not flush or bury cat litter. It should be double-bagged and disposed of in regular garbage.
- Do not dispose of pet waste onto streets, driveways, sidewalks, curbs or gutters.
- Do not dispose pet waste into inlets, catch basins, ditches, storm drains, channels or any body of water.

Vehicle Washing, Repair, & Maintenance

- It's best to wash your car at a commercial car wash. When washing at home, use as little detergent as possible and wash your car on grass, dirt, or gravel to prevent any wash water from flowing into the storm drain, inlet, ditch, street, etc...
- Always check cars, boats, motorcycles, and other machinery and equipment for leaks and spills.
- Clean up spills with absorbent materials such as cat litter or sand. Sweep up all material when liquid is absorbed.
- Place drip pans under vehicles to catch leaking fluids.
- Do not dump oil or other automotive fluids into inlets, ditches, catch basins, storm drains, channels, etc... etc. Recycle or properly dispose them.

Swimming Pool Care

- Drain your pool into the sanitary sewer and not into storm drains.
- Only drain your pool when the test kit does not detect chlorine. De-chlorinate naturally allowing the water to sit for 5-10 days without adding chlorine or use a chemical additive to de-chlorinate pool water.
- Store chemicals in a covered area to prevent spills - use dry clean up methods if there is a spill.
- The City of Mobile prohibits the discharge of chlorinated or salt water from pools or spas to a storm drain, street, or ditch.