



Storm Water Management Program

Riverhead Department of Engineering
(631) 727-3200 ext. 201

Town of Riverhead Storm Water Management



The Town of Riverhead is a diverse ecological community and is the home to hundreds of species of wildlife and sea life. In this Pamphlet we will be focusing on education about illicit discharge, and how you, as an individual, can help keep our community's groundwater, creeks, and larger surface waters clean. There are two bodies of water most people think of when dealing with pollution and runoff on Long Island, The Peconic Bay and the Long Island Sound. There is also a third body



of water far below us, our Aquifers. Long Island is situated over a sole source aquifer system that provides potable water to its residents. There are three layered aquifers on LI.

The three aforementioned bodies of water provide a home to sea life and shell fish integral to our economy. Swimming areas are important to the members of our community and serve as a seasonal tourist destination. Our aquifers provide fresh water for drinking and irrigation of crops which is vital to our local farming community.

So let's look a bit at some of the substances harmful to our essential bodies of water. There are three main culprits responsible for beach closings, algae blooms, and unhealthy shell fish. These are high levels of Fecal coliform, increased amounts of Nitrogen, and toxins from engine oil and road grime, respectively. Fecal coliform, responsible for 37% of Suffolk County beach closings in 2006

About Illicit Discharge

(Information supplied by the EPA), is found in pet waste which can be washed into storm drains by rain which can potentially end up in local bodies of water. Fecal Coli Form can also find its way to bodies of water through potentially malfunctioning septic systems. Increased Nitrogen content, often



responsible for algae blooms which can deplete the water of oxygen, is harmful to the health of fish and shellfish. A gross quantity of fertilizer containing nitrogen used on lawns that

makes its way to the water, is known as illicit discharge. Nitrogen can also make it's way to our aquifers (it already has reached our shallowest aquifer) and makes them unsafe for drinking if the Nitrogen concentration becomes too high. Oil, more from illegal dumping than normal road grime, is another example of a problem we have with illicit discharge.

All the examples cited in the previous paragraph fall in the category of illicit discharge, but there are other, more serious examples. Connecting a drain from your home to a town catch basin (storm sewer) is a serious and fineable offense, and is known as an illicit connection.



Illicit connections include the connection of a sanitary sewage pipe to a basin, and just to clarify, sanitary sewage is what you flush down your toilet, or dump down the drain. Another serious and fineable example is dumping waste, oil, chemicals, solvents, or paints into a catch basin. Drainage Basins are meant to catch, filter, and recharge water that contains normal amounts of road wash, but are not designed to handle any of the aforementioned substances. Those substances should be brought to your local recycling center for proper disposal. Check the resource page for more information on hazmat drop points.

What can I do to help?

So now you are wondering to yourself, how can I reduce illicit discharge and save the environment?

Here are some tips:

Lawn Care tips to Reduce Nitrogen Pollution:

-Minimize lawn areas, replacing turf with native and other low maintenance plantings.

-Improve soil structure by aerating your lawn and top dressing with compost.

-Allow grass to compost by leaving clippings in place when mowing. (Don't bag it)

-Use the least toxic method for weed and pest control. (less chemicals, more weed -pulling).

-Don't over water your lawn (excess water washes the nutrients from your soil).

-Test the soil annually before applying any fertilizer, so you know exactly what to apply, if any.



-Apply products sparingly, no more than 1lb. of Nitrogen per 1000 sq. ft./year.

-Choose organic fertilizers that have slow release nutrients.

-Read, understand, and follow all pesticide product labeling.

-Avoid run-off – do not apply fertilizers or pesticides within 100 ft of surface waters or -wetlands, when the ground is frozen, or when there is a chance of rain.

Lawn Care Tips courtesy of “PEP Talk”

Keep a look out for illicit connections:

-Check out storm drains for signs of tampering, or surrounding ground for signs a pipe has been laid under ground to the basin.

-If you hear water running to a catch basin when it is not raining, this may be a sign that an illicit connection is present.

-If you smell raw sewage in a catch basin, this is a sure sign of a serious problem or illicit connection.

-If you think you may have found an illicit connection, call the town and let us know! See Resource page for contact information.

Maintaining your septic system:

-If the ground near your cesspool is soggy or saturated this is a sign that it may be time to get it pumped.

-Have your septic system checked every 3 years by a professional.

Pick up after your dog:

-If you take your dog for a walk and he or she poops on the road, near the road, or on a median, please pick it up. Your dog's waste will find its way to a catch basin.

-Visit www.poopbags.com or www.dogpoopbags.com for information on doggy waste bags.

-Animal Waste can either be flushed down the toilet (without bag) or thrown away in a biodegradable bag.

Participate in the Town's S.T.O.P. (Stop Throwing Out Pollutants) program which occurs twice a year.

Check the Resources on page 6 for more information on where you can drop off hazardous materials.

Resources

Hazardous Material Drop Points

| Material | Drop Point |
|--|--|
| Oil | Nearest Auto Parts store or mechanics garage. |
| Paint, Solvents, and Light Bulbs Containing Mercury. | Town of Riverhead S.T.O.P. Program. For more information visit: riverheadli.com/sanitation.html |
| Rechargeable Batteries | RadioShack, Riverhead Town Hall Battery Repository |
| Yard Waste | Former Riverhead Town Land Fill. For more information visit: riverheadli.com/sanitation.html |

Riverhead Town Engineering Dept.

Call: (631) 727-3200 Ext. 201 to report Illicit Connections or for any information regarding Storm Water Management.

<http://www.riverheadli.com>

Phase II Public Outreach Initiative Pamphlet by Storm Water Management in cooperation with Riverhead Town Engineering Dept. Pamphlet written and compiled by Ian Davison.